3 TOWER. IRV.

films and filming FEBRUARY 1964 3s

FOREIGN FILMS IN BRITAIN
What you will and won't see in '64

STANLEY KRAMER
Sending myself the message

CRIME INC.
G-Men versus Gangsters

KEEPING UP WITH THE BEATLES
Making films for teenagers

JEAN GABIN
No actor ever had it so good

alain delon in
THE BIG SNATCH

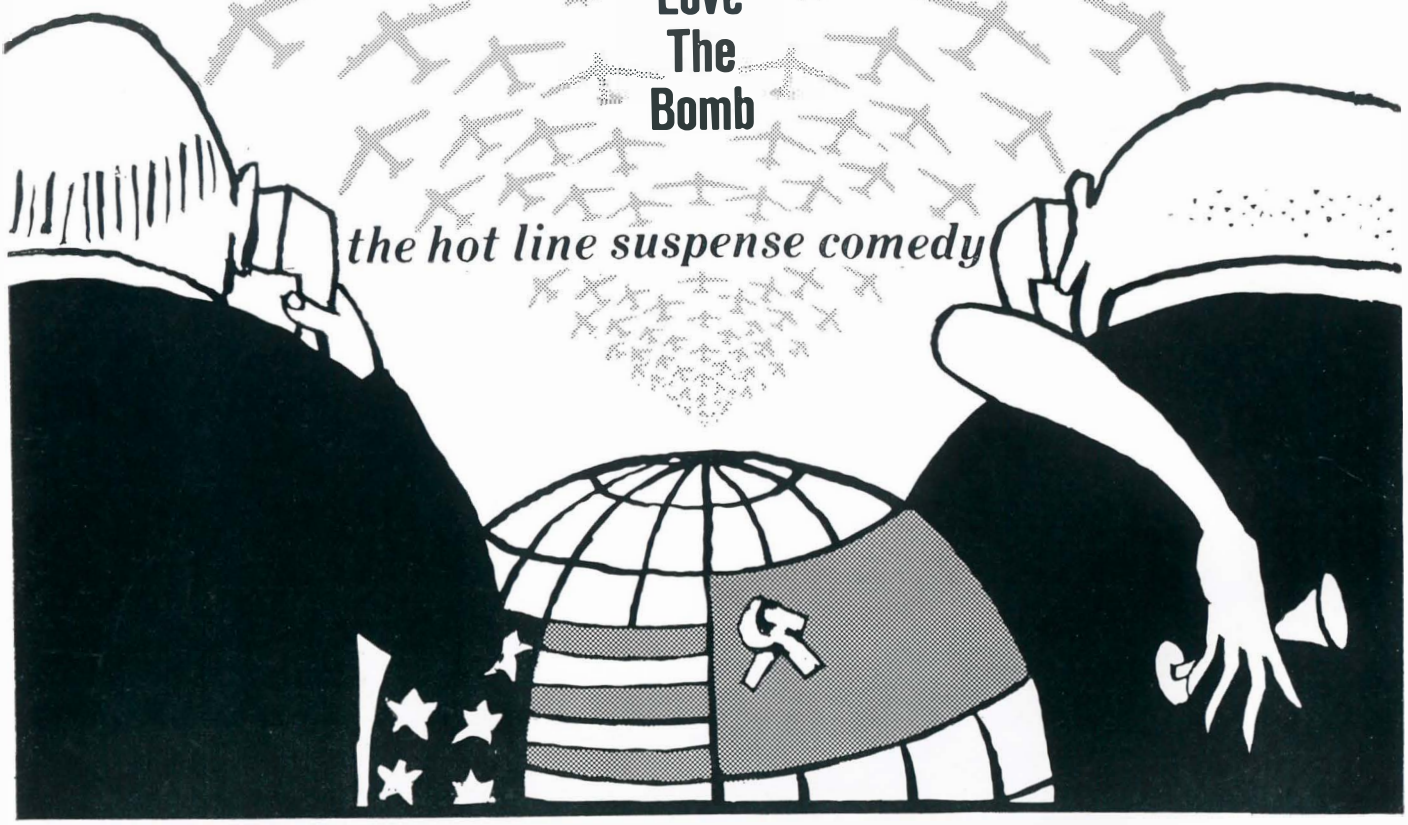
Peter Sellers · George C. Scott

In Stanley Kubrick's

Dr. Strangelove

Or: How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Bomb

the hot line suspense comedy



also starring **Sterling Hayden · Keenan Wynn · Slim Pickens** and introducing **Tracy Reed** as "Miss Foreign Affairs" · Screenplay by **Stanley Kubrick, Peter George** and **Terry Southern** · Based on the book "Red Alert" by Peter George · Produced and Directed by **Stanley Kubrick** · A Columbia Picture A BLC RELEASE

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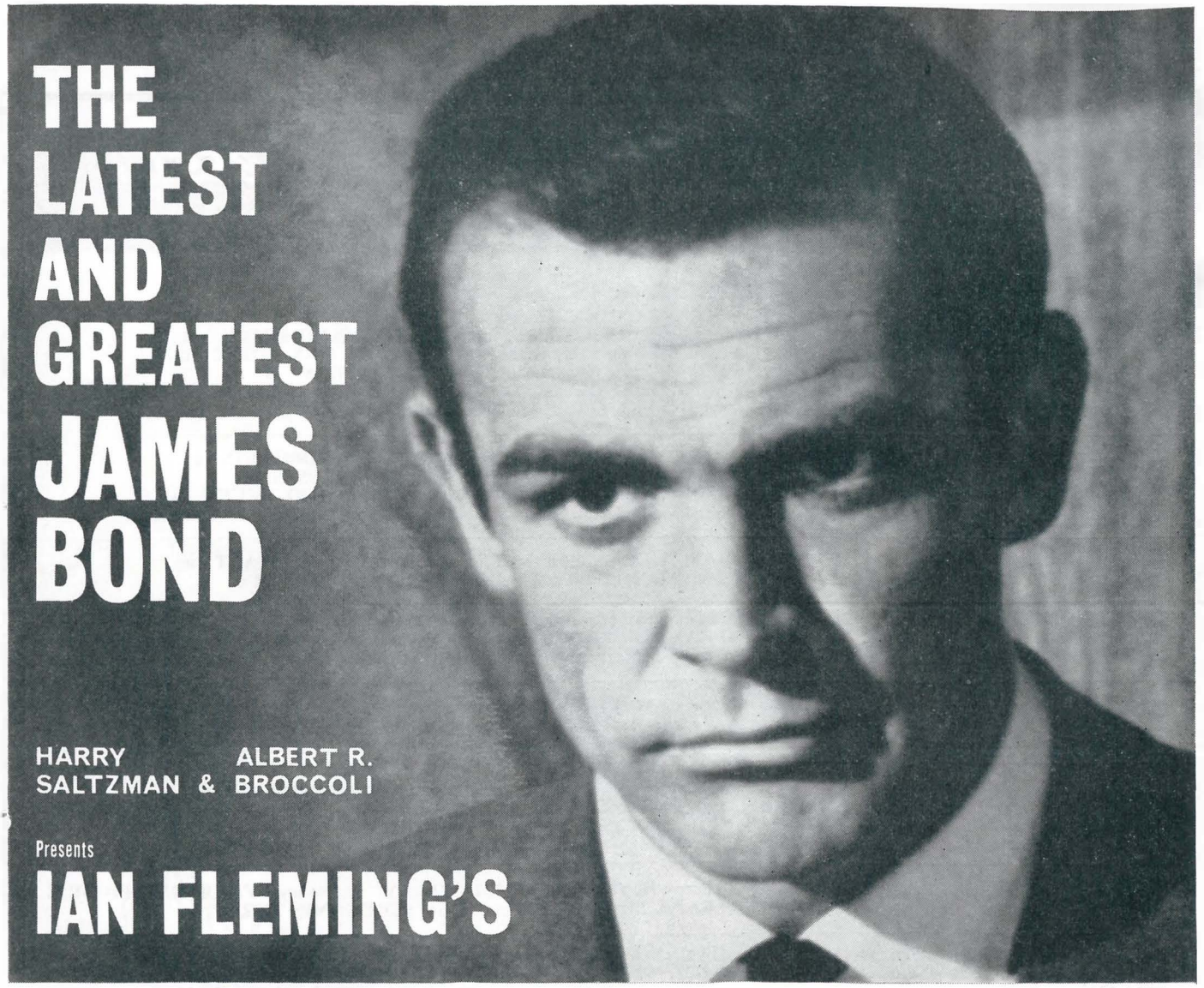
CLASSIC *For all that is BEST in Cinema Entertainment*

BAKER STREET **WEL : 8836**	**Jan.**	**19—4 days**	MARIO LANZA, Dorothy Kirsten, **THE GREAT CARUSO u**
	Jan.	**23—3 days**	AUDREY HEPBURN, Mel Ferrer, **WAR AND PEACE u**
	Jan.	**30—3 days**	Vivien Leigh, **THE ROMAN SPRING OF MRS. STONE x**
	Feb.	**2—4 days**	Dirk Bogarde Season, **TALE OF TWO CITIES u**
	Feb.	**6—3 days**	**SONG WITHOUT END u** 9th—7 days **VICTIM x**
	Feb.	**16—4 days**	GUINNESS, SELLERS, **THE LADYKILLERS u**
CHELSEA **FLA : 4388**	**Jan.**	**30—3 days**	ALEC GUINNESS, **KIND HEARTS AND CORONETS a**
	Feb.	**6—3 days**	Jeanne Moreau, **LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES x**
	Feb.	**13—3 days**	Doris Day, **THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH a**
	Feb.	**16—4 days**	Shirley MacLaine, Audrey Hepburn, **THE LOUDEST WHISPER x**
CROYDON **CRO : 6655**	**Jan.**	**26—7 days**	JAMES DEAN, Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, **GIANT a**
	Feb.	**2—7 days**	Marcello Mastroianni, Fellini's **LA DOLCE VITA x**
DALSTON **CLI : 6677**	**Jan.**	**26—4 days**	Susan Strasberg, Emanuelle Riva, **KAPO x**
	Feb.	**6—3 days**	FRANK SINATRA, Gina Lollobrigida, **NEVER SO FEW a**
	Feb.	**9—4 days**	Jeanne Moreau, Francois Traffaut's **JULES AND JIM x**
KILBURN **MAI : 6767**	**Feb.**	**2—7 days**	Hitchcock's **STRANGERS ON A TRAIN a** **SPINSTER a**
	Feb.	**9—7 days**	Grace Kelly, James Stewart, Hitchcock's **REAR WINDOW a**
	Feb.	**16—7 days**	**KING SOLOMON'S MINES u** **ROAD TO HONG KONG u**
NOTTING HILL GATE **PAR : 5750**	**Jan.**	**30—3 days**	SHIRLEY MacLAINE, Jack Lemmon, **THE APARTMENT a**
	Feb.	**2—4 days**	Judy Holliday, William Holden, **BORN YESTERDAY a**
	Feb.	**16—4 days**	Rise & fall of the Hitler regime, **MEIN KAMPF x**
	Feb.	**20—3 days**	Alfred Hitchcock's **THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH a**
PRAED STREET **PAD : 5716**	**Feb.**	**2—7 days**	Audrey Hepburn, **ROMAN HOLIDAY u** Disney's **VANISHING PRAIRIE u**
	Feb.	**16—7 days**	FRANK SINATRA, Dean Martin, **SERGEANTS THREE u**
STOCKWELL **BRI : 2513**	**Jan.**	**23—3 days**	DANNY KAYE, Louis Armstrong, **THE FIVE PENNIES u**
	Jan.	**26—4 days**	PAUL NEWMAN, Orson Welles, **THE LONG HOT SUMMER a**
	Jan.	**30—3 days**	PAUL NEWMAN, Joanne Woodward, **FROM THE TERRACE x**
	Feb.	**2—4 days**	Brian Donlevy, Jack Warner, **THE QUATERMASS XPERIMENT x**
TOOTING BEC **BAL : 5566**	**Jan.**	**19—7 days**	**WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION u** **THE MILLIONAIRESS u**
	Feb.	**2—7 days**	LAURENCE OLIVIER, Claire Bloom, **RICHARD III u**
VOGUE TOOTING **BAL : 6788**	**Feb.**	**2—4 days**	**VIRIDIANA x** Fernandel, **RETURN OF DON CAMILLO u**
	Feb.	**6—3 days**	Jean Servais, **RIFIFI x** Susan Strasberg, **TASTE OF FEAR x**
	Feb.	**13—3 days**	Dana Andrews, Peggy Cummins, **NIGHT OF THE DEMON x**
WATERLOO STN. **WAT : 4323**	**11 a.m. to 3 p.m. :**		Non-Stop Cartoon Shows. **From 3 p.m. :** Feature Film Programmes
	Jan.	**23—3 days**	Michael Redgrave, Margaret Lockwood, **THE LADY VANISHES a**
	Feb.	**2—4 days**	James Stewart, Richard Widmark, **TWO RODE TOGETHER a**
	Feb.	**9—4 days**	Sinatra, **TENDER TRAP a** Feb. 13—3 days, **MAN IN GREY a**
CHESTER **TEL : 21354**	**Jan.**	**27—6 days**	Bette Davis, **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE x**
	Feb.	**10—6 days**	**MONDO CANE x** Jean Seberg, **INFIDELITY x**
GLASGOW **CENTRAL : 3400**	**Jan.**	**19—7 days**	Hitchcock's **REAR WINDOW a** **MURDER SHE SAID u**
	Jan.	**27—6 days**	**STRANGERS ON A TRAIN a** **HEAVEN KNOWS, MR. ALLISON u**
	Feb.	**3—6 days**	**TWO RODE TOGETHER a** **ROAD TO HONG KONG u**
MANCHESTER **CENTRAL : 6015**	**Jan.**	**26—7 days**	ORSON WELLES, Joan Fontaine, **JANE EYRE a**
	Feb.	**2—7 days**	**JOLSON STORY u** Feb. 9—7 days **THE MILLIONAIRESS u**
SHEFFIELD **TEL : 25624**	**Jan.**	**19—7 days**	James Dean, Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, **GIANT a**
	Feb.	**9—7 days**	**REAR WINDOW a** Guinness, **MAN IN THE WHITE SUIT u**
SOUTHAMPTON **TEL : 23465**	**Jan.**	**26—7 days**	**JULES AND JIM x** SELLERS, **NEVER LET GO x**
	Feb.	**2—7 days**	**FREAKS x** Lollobrigida, **WHERE THE HOT WIND BLOWS x**
	Feb.	**9—7 days**	Audrey Hepburn, Henry Fonda, Leo Tolstoy's **WAR AND PEACE u**



Goldfinger

STARRING

SEAN CONNERY as JAMES BOND 007

Directed by GUY HAMILTON

Produced by HARRY SALTZMAN & ALBERT R. BROCCOLI

TECHNICOLOR

UNITED ARTISTS

FOR WORLD-WIDE RELEASE THIS YEAR!

LETTERS

write to 16 Buckingham Palace-road, London SW1

I refer to your Box Office survey and I would be most interested to hear the source of your so-called authoritatively confidential information on which you base your assessment.

As far as *From Russia with Love* is concerned, I take nothing away from this magnificent picture which has been doing such tremendous business, but when I read in your footnote that your survey relates to the 12-months ending November 2, 1963 and *From Russia with Love* had it's London Release on October 28, 1963, I feel that this can only be crystal gazing when you think that you can determine the eventual gross. On the other hand, *Summer Holiday* has now been in distribution for some 12-months, and I can assure you that I *do* know the results of this film, so I am more than surprised to read your comment that this ' is some distance behind '.

I cannot see how it is possible to compare a theoretical gross with an actual gross, particularly when I feel certain that you do not know what the results are to date on *Summer Holiday*.

Your statement is erroneous to the extent of being ridiculous, and I think that when a paper such as yours publishes a report which some people may think comes from an authoritative source you should make sure of your facts before you go to press.

A BARBER
General Sales Manager,
Warner-Pathe Distributors,
Wardour-street, London W.1

Films and filming 1963 survey specifically made this statement: ' Films considered include only those starting their release during this period (twelve months ending November 2 1963); and adjustments have been made for any overlap to complete the start or end of a main release period '. We would note that cinemas playing both *From Russia With Love* and *Summer Holiday* report the former film as playing to more people; and the trade paper, *Kine Weekly*, subsequent to our survey but working independently named *From Russia With Love* as top general release. Of course, we are pleased that a British film of the quality of *Summer Holiday* should be second among several hundred general releases and we wish the new Cliff Richard film success in 1964—*Editor*

Ashamed?

Visconti's *The Leopard* arrived at the London Carlton on December 3, in the notoriously bad pre-Christmas cinema-going period, and was taken off after three weeks—as previously arranged—to make way for the Christmas attraction of *Take Her, She's Mine*. Might one ask why? Are the distributors or cinema owners ashamed of—or have they no confidence in—*The Leopard, per se,* or of the version they are handling? If they don't like *their Leopard,* wouldn't they let us see the version which Visconti wishes us to see? Has it escaped their notice that Visconti's version has been running for over six months in Paris at much-increased admission prices and looks like going on for another six, and that in Paris and in Italy (per John Francis Lane's article and the list of Paris box-office successes published by Cameo in their advert, both in the January *films and filming*) it has been a box-office sensation? It is assumed that the British aren't sufficiently ' intellectual ' or something for *The Leopard*? If so, I would point out that in Italy and Paris, as in this country, cinemagoers have been flocking to the same films—*The Great Escape, The Longest Day, How the West was Won, Lawrence of Arabia* . . .

DAVID SHIPMAN
334 *Brockley-road,*
SE4

Holiday fare

I was absolutely disgusted during Christmas, with the atrocious collection of films shown here in Newcastle. On both circuits there were films like *Sword of El Cid, The Bells of St Trinians, Kidnapped* and many more which should have been either burn or sold to television years ago. If they are not old then they are invariably, ghastly—dubbed badly or Italian, but, one way or another, I suppose in the eyes of John Davis and his colleagues they could be called ' entertainments '. We could perhaps accept these films (even though they do represent the nadir of the film industry) if only we were able to see some of the more brilliant and artistic films during the year—without a struggle. During 1963 this has not been possible and I cannot conceive that any progress will be made unless there is some intervention to form a third distributing circuit. It seems that both circuits over Xmas had been out to give the film enthusiasts as much punishment for past sins as they dare. I would have liked to have seen *The Caretaker, The Balcony, The Servant* or perhaps *Becket?* But most of these films have either been caught up in London or they haven't yet arrived there.

The delay and mismanagement is so bad that (providing we had half a dozen other circuits) I would gladly see both Rank and ABC go bankrupt. If only the filmgoer had some way of making these bigoted people suffer without depriving himself. If any of your writers have any suggestions to make along these lines I am sure they will be well received throughout the country—they certainly will be if the cinema scene has been so terrible in other parts as it has been here. It is true to say that 50 per cent of the films are old ones and of the new releases there was not one of any consequence at all at Xmas. The sooner something radical is done the better it will be.

R A COOPER
7 *Linton-road,*
Low Tees,
G/head 9
Co-Durham

films and filming

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Cover: Alain Delon in Henri Verneuil's 'The Big Snatch' ('Melodie en sous-sol' opening at the Cameo-Poly, London, soon.

Cover design: DESMOND ELLIOTT

mediately, and maybe not for quite a while.

But the area of trying to influence thought through blatant subject matter or through the large canvas, the controversial film, is sublimented in my mind to that area in which I think I can do more. That is, a piece of material to which I can give whatever it is I have to contribute, and thus create an influence through its intrinsic merit.

Now, *On the Beach,* with all its shortcomings, did stand for something; if nothing more as to whether or not a nuclear war would destroy mankind. That was the subject of much argument from the scientist to the public level. On the other hand, I don't think *On the Beach* represented as much to the hearts of people as *Hiroshima mon Amour.*

It is difficult for film-makers, in the contemporary sense, to be able to keep up with current events, which are not always so clear to us, because I think the politicians are hard pressed to translate what current events mean. If you decide to make a film of that nature, then you have to reflect some point of view. I don't mind even reflecting a point of view which is not popular; but I like to be clear in my own mind as to what my own point of view is if I am going to reflect it! This is difficult, we live in wonderously mixed-up times in which the sense of what is right seems to change a little every day. One of the reasons for the Nuremberg trials was to re-establish a moral set of principles under which everything, at least theoretically, could operate. When the judge says 'We stand, whatever the difficulty, against expediency; for justice, truth and the value of a single human being,' at least that is something to which you can cling as a moral precept.

Recently, other people have directed films for me—Hubert Cornfield did *Pressure Point;* John Cassavets did *A Child is Waiting* and Richard Wilson has just completed *Invitation to a Gunfighter.* It maybe true that because I felt an urgency to make these films that I had other directors do them for me; the scripts were completed—I wanted to go ahead.

In the case of *Pressure Point* it had to do with hatred, and the reasons for it, on the American scene. The necessity of doing a film like this was, because of the hate groups, a pressure of me. It contained a radical kind of psychotic type which recent events have made all too unfortunately true. We changed the part of the psychiatrist from a Jew to a Negro, for practically the same reason as we changed the central character in *Home of the Brave* to a Negro: that is, in the contemporary sense it seemed more pointed, valid and dramatic. Also I was anxious to show the Negro in a different position to that of the subservient, non-educated one; rather as somebody of more dignity in order to reflect the prejudice in this area. I think it's a fairly good film, but then aren't most!

A Child is Waiting was a different proposition. I've always been frustrated in the sense that the mood and approch of young directors all over the world has so far outdistanced, artistically, the American approach; the nouvelle vague, the neorealists and even the Japanese attempts to modernize, have been much more exciting in technique. In taking a subject that is very difficult, because it deals with retarded children, you need to make a really wonderful piece of work in order to achieve any kind of audience. For this kind of thing there is no doubt resistence from financiers' distributors and exhibitors, so I thought I would put all the eggs in one basket and let John Cassavetes (who represented a younger school of directors) express himself in a more modern vein in terms of approaching the subject. I don't think that the result is a great film; I think its a good one.

We've been searching for sometime for what might be broadly termed the American idiom; something which represents in vitality and quality a distinctly American characteristic, as against the copyism which goes on amongst our younger people. It doesn't necessarily follow that anything that is rough hewn or basic is necessarily also good. Perhaps we will eventually achieve a blend in our own idiom; many young people are now finding greater freedom on the American scene because the creative person has come more into the driver's seat since the demise of the large studio operation. This is encouraging, it's rather revolutionary for us, although it might not produce evidence of itself for another three or four years since it takes that much time for it actually to take hold.

Now with *Invitation to a Gunfighter,* this is a western story I have had for some time. The western has been pretty well beaten into plough shares: the television giant eats up story ideas. So we had to find a new approach. This one is not a psychological western! It has a great deal of merit, and I think Wilson has done an excellent job. It presents a character who represents a moral, or immoral, position to be approximated. The story deals with a town which hires a gunfighter to solve its problems; the result is that the gunfighter becomes the dominant force in the town. So this new evil becomes a greater one that the original evil. The conflict is between the two evils, and the actual base of the story is that the town itself has to make a decision on a moral base: it's up to the town and no one else.

I don't think that having other directors do films for me will play any part in my future plans, though. During the making of these three films I had been involved in the preparation and production of *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World.* The idea for this was not mine. It came from William and Tania Rose, who wrote a letter stating an idea for an approach to a kind of catharsis in comedy which would be based upon something very grim: greed. Greed has been the basis of many comedies. I didn't think of this as necessarily being *per se* comedy: I read the story and thought simply that I could make a wonderful film of it, although I'd never been in that area before. The result has been stunningly controversial for me: people either love it or hate it—but one thing I can say freely and that is that they know damn well they've been to the movies after they've seen it. On the one hand, it's been called a return to the slapstick of the Mack Sennett era; on the other hand it's been called a 'savage, moral document' in which 'how cruel to use comedy for such a premise'.

I certainly viewed it as a story of greed and of the inability, in some cases, of people to laugh at an extension of themselves. The intent was to extend the activities of a group of people so that step by step they would be willing to undergo increasingly more fantastic and dangerous experiences to achieve something to which they were not entitled at the start. I did not hesitate to be violent, to go all the way, to smash everything in sight, for then to reach the climax which turns out to be an empty one. This was the idea: an extension of truth to the ludicrous.

There is also a question of morals A woman coming out of a theatre in Hollywood said to me 'I object strenuously to the morality of this; people aren't like this. How could you think people could act like it?'. And she added 'As a matter of fact, I can't tell you how much I rooted for Spencer Tracy to get away with the money'. Now that seems to me to be a peculiarly perverse sense of morality. But in the film that was purposeful: it was necessary for me that people should want Tracy to go away with the money because he *shouldn't* get away with it; it doesn't matter that his reasons may have been personally more valid or that he was a nicer man. This film represents a part of society which is corrupt; I don't feel it is necessary to show the other part of society. And it seems to me that people show a surprising amount of guilt when they say that they think that this represents all people—they must not have much confidence in their society.

The critical reaction has been extraordinarily mixed: some as in the *New York Times* take it is one of the absolutely most fantastic pieces of entertainment put on the screen, with its moral undertone; then *Time* or someone like Leonard Mosley say 'This is absolutely the most horrid attack on the sensibilities, that it's unbelievable'. It's very pleasant to get all across the board with reviews.

In my lifetime I've had a certain amount of good reviews. A prime example: I have never read better reviews, written on a single film, than were written in London for *Inherit the Wind.* They were ecstatic without exception. Yet the film failed so miserably, that I cannot even begin to explain why or how. With *Mad World* I have had a new experience where for the first time I have evidently reached the soft underbelly of the mass.

From a recorded interview

KEEPING UP WITH THE BEATLES

or, is grandad really with it?

ROBIN BEAN

'This business that I'm in, I would say 60 per cent of it is on emotion and a word which we all know—and I'm not in accord to using—but it's the only word which can sum up what I have to say, which is 'sex'. As far as the girls who turn out and scream and stand there and cry and things like that, it's something that I wouldn't knock.'

—Paul Anka, in the documentary, by Koenig and Kroiter, *Lonely Boy*

Amidst scenes of pandemonium, hysteria and misplaced policeman's helmets, the Beatles arrived. From a local group beating up Merseyside, they develop in little over the space of a day so it seems into a national obsession: probably more because of a scuffle for tickets which assumed the proportions of a near riot by the time the papers reported it than for anything else. Since then, their activities have merited the attention of MPs, QCs, as well as the PCs. With the aid of the kids the Beatles are practically everywhere: newspapers, hoardings, railways carriages where insects adorn the walls with various numbers of legs under which rapt admirers have changed 'the Beatles are flabby' slogan by carefully substituting 'aren't'. The Beatles even have their own Beatle Book published at increasingly frequent intervals, and for public services we may yet expect them to become the Royal Beatles (By Appointment).

Just about the only variety we don't have—yet—are celluloid Beatles for with its otiosity the cinema takes a while to adjust to ever changing moods and whims. Sometimes by the time it makes up its mind to take the plunge the water's drained away. Equally so, by the time the Beatles make their first film (one of those 'days in the life of . . .' things, scripted by Alun Owen, for Walter Shenson), which is due to start in May, their popularity may be on the wane, or they'll be classed in the same 'old-fashioned' bracket as now encompasses the indomitable Elvis.

The business of finding out, and following up, what will attract younger audiences has always been somewhat of a blind spot: often the big successes have come out of other intentions (eg the more serious 'social document' kind brought out *The Wild Ones* and *Blackboard Jungle* which were not quite intended for the way in which they were received). Kazan's *East of Eden* was a delayed reaction success (ran twice as long on its revival in the West End as on its first showing; and on first release was not greatly successful—much of its money came after *Rebel Without a Cause* and Dean's death). Whereas the cinema's reflection of violence and insecurity in the mid 'fifties only tended to popularise both moods—those terrible parents who allowed the second world war to begin took all the blame—life has now settled down to forget all about the past and follow up the pursuit of exploiting those with the most money to spend, invariably the teenagers. They at least don't seem to have problems in the old popular psycho-neurotic pattern of a few years ago. Anyway those 'symbols' are gone, Brando is now institutionalised, last seen as cultured ambassador in Far East; Dean would have been 33 and the youthful appeal would have worn off; while the rest of the gang have either disappeared, been absorbed into TV or just become respectable.

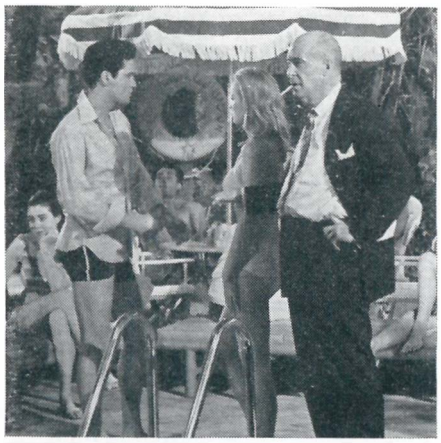
The so-called teenage market has developed its own mania complex, as advertising and entertainment is increasingly aimed at this free spending section. With the standards these kids have to keep up today the cost of living should soon soar up yet again; though one may spare a thought for the poor men's hairdressers who now only have to trim the highland cattle crops twice a year, if that. (*Becket* should be a wow; in a poster in Wardour-street Burton and O'Toole are sporting the best in Beatle thatches.) But as one cannot generalise about a particular age group, the only measure is that of what is going to appeal to the mass? This immediately appears to rule out that vaguest of terms, 'Art'; though not necessarily implying that artlessness is going to grow.

Before wandering into the who, what and why of filmland's drive into this market, there is a depressing aspect, ludicrous really, of the complete isolation of one generation from another. We've heard plenty about the grumbling parents bemoaning that their kids are earning as much as they are, and spending it twice as fast; and also of the teenagers knocking everything that represents convention (admittedly many of the establishment figures don't exactly draw out confidence or respect, the age difference being nearly half a decade in many cases). What, any-

Delmer Daves, seen on the set of *Parrish,* directed Troy Donahue in four successive films. They all followed a similar pattern

Norman Taurog—right—has become one of the 'regular' Presley directors. Illustrated, with Presley on *It Happened at the World's Fair*

Richard Thorpe directed *Huckleberry Finn* in the '30s; MGM history spectacles in the '50s; has done *Follow the Boys* and a couple of Presley films: below, with Presley on *Fun in Acapulco*



Publicists—always anxious to associate their teenage protégés with the more mature artist. How is it done? Picture shows Robert Ryan, Cliff Richard and Peter Ustinov. Publicity man's caption reads: 'Books—that was the big talking point when Cliff Richard took time off from *The Young Ones* to visit the stage next door and meet Peter Ustinov and Robert Ryan, stars of *Billy Budd.* And why? Because Cliff recently wrote his autobiography *It's Great To Be Young;* Ustinov published his first novel *The Loser* immediately before coming to Elstree to prepare *Billy Budd.* Ryan, though no writer himself, is married to American novelist Jessica Cadwalider'

Ten directors for the 'teens have an average age of 65.6 years. 80 per cent of their audience are under 35 years

The fans and the idol: Paul Anka in the documentary madeabout him by Koenig and Kroiter, *Lonely Boy.* It's an amusing yet penetrating look at the pop world—right

Fun and money: a group of youths try to earn a living from the tourists in a seaside town, in Michael Winner's *The System* (one of British cinema's few originals) with Iain Gregory—centre right

'I'm so young . . . ': Don Sharp's *Linda,* which swung into the mood of youth. With Alan Rothwell and Carol White. An object lesson in enthusiasm, vitality and fresh ideas —far right

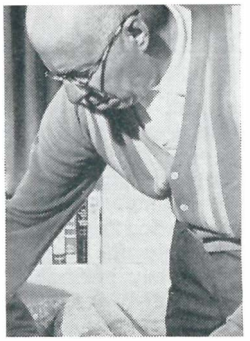
Rudolph Maté: cameraman for Dreyer in the '20s, directed films in Hollywood among which was *The Great Caruso;* recently made the teenage musical comedy with Jess Conrad and Aliki, *Aliki*

way, is this great new generation worth? It's a phenomenon far greater than it's importance, there's a selfish live it up regardless of everyone else attitude, an 'I'm not interested in the lessons of the past, or of learning from events I haven't witnessed' outlook, sceptical, cynical of advice (although often not without good reason). Again, this is a mass feeling; there's always the conscientious, self-critical minority!

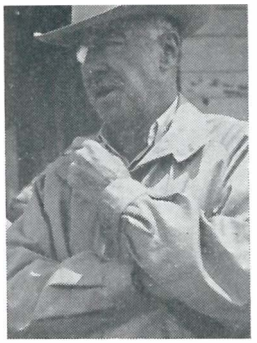
The only word to describe what is lacking today, and not only in the youngsters, is one that has largely lost its meaning; and that is respect. It's not something thrust out by convention, clamped down on you by authority, or, conversely, broken by informality. It's a genuine trust and belief in the integrity of the power class, whether politician, employer or parent. It's also a genuine belief in improving society and individual relationships. But that has been all but smashed. And it's usually too late by the time people get around to analysing just why good intentions fail, or to getting the real values of life into perspective. The great tragedy of President Kennedy's assassination was that only then did the mass relise the importance of what he was trying to achieve; and that had he lived he would have been held up by petty prejudices, vested interests and apathy. Certainly it has given many people a strong jolt: but whether their new resolutions will last long is yet to be seen. The silent crowd of people filing in and out of the

l Wallis: one of llywood's most con- ently successful pro- cers, with a sharp eye new talent — put der contract Shirley cLaine, Dean Martin d Jerry Lewis and is Presley

George Marshall: has directed 415 films. Recently been making a series of comedies with Glenn Ford, in which the actor has been playing the shy innocent abroad. Now completing *Company of Cowards*

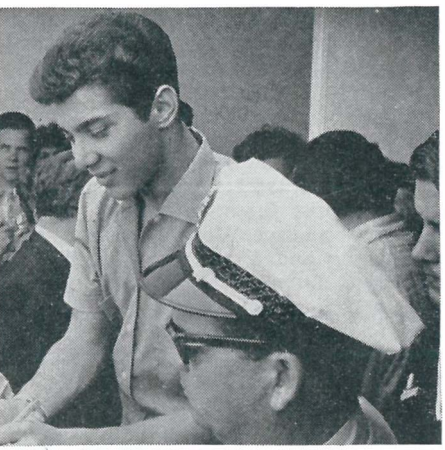


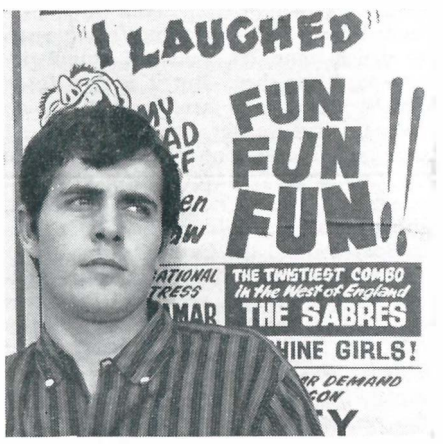
Howard Hawks: noted for his gangster and adventure films of the '30s; westerns of the '40s and '50s. Included Ricky Nelson in his *Rio Bravo*. Has just directed Rock Hudson in *Man's Favourite Sport*



Raoul Walsh: started as actor with Biograph in 1912, as director his films include *Sadie Thompson, What Price Glory? White Heat, Private's Affair,* just directed Troy Donahue in *A Distant Trumpet*

Joshua Logan: known mainly for his adaptations of Broadway successes, also did a comedy with Perkins and Jane Fonda, *Tall Story,* and has just completed a 'young' sequel to *Mr Roberts*





American Embassy immediately afterwards contained a large number of young people who seemed stunned by an ideal they had only just realised; yet the same day we heard that police has had to cope with a crowd of girls who burst into tears when told the Beatles show had been sold out. Sometimes, it just doesn't make sense.

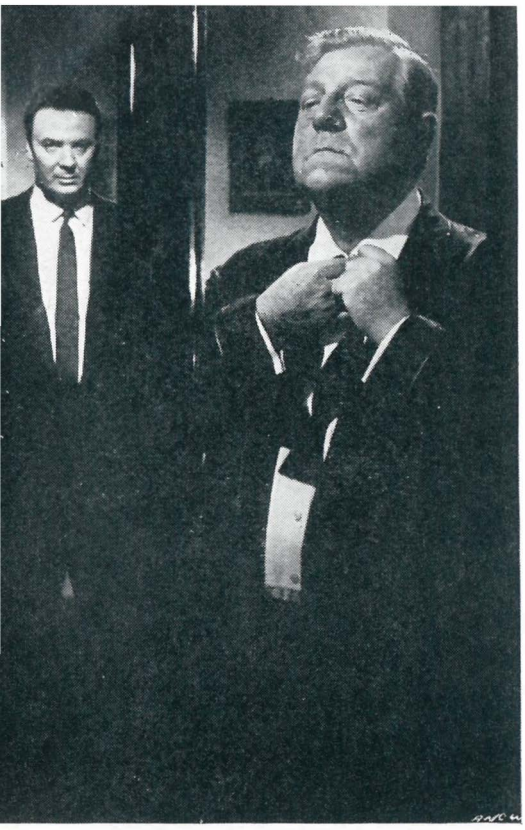
But after an all too brief period of self-analysis life returns to its familiar pattern. So we're back to the pleasure seekers, and on subsequent days the press is offered shows of *Its a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* and *What a Crazy World.*

In England the Beatle wings spread; in Germany Peter Kraus has developed a shrewd business head shying from the deadly over-exposure; in America Elvis Presley has ambled through yet two more films with several lined-up; while in France *Cinemonde* continues as it has for nearly a year to devote pages every week to Johnny Hallyday. Hallyday, incidentally, has recently been offering the Beatles competition in the game of how to cause a traffic jam. Fans blocked the Paris streets on the opening of his *D'Ou viens-tu Johnny?* (estimated that eighty per cent were under 20). Inside the cinema, to quote a handout, 'The applause began with the opening credits and the atmosphere was electric throughout the showing, rising to fever pitch when Johnny and Sylvia (Vartan) announced their engagement in the interval'. The film claims to 'delight children from 7 to 77'. (Looking through the lists of the directors responsible for many of those featuring these idols, especially in America one is made to realise that maybe there is rather a high proportion of children of nearly 77 in charge of the proceedings).

But it is not only the younger singers who create these avid followings. The personality cult has seen many additions from the not so distant era of Tab Hunter (bit old for teenage parts, so now following up his career in Italy with *The Golden Arrow*—Arabian Nights and all that) and Tony Perkins (who never did quite make it in this area; since improved his status on the continent) up to Troy Donahue who evidently started with serious intentions as an actor—wonder whatever happened to them? He shares one thing in common with Presley, apart from their recent inability to move in anything but a lumbering manner; both have become progressively whiter and whiter in morai character from film to film. Donahue in *Palm Springs Weekend* has inherited ex-Presley director Norman Taurog, a sprightly 64, who piloted Presley through *G I Blues, Blue Hawaii, Girls Girls Girls* and *It Happened at the Worlds Fair* (only the first really had any vitality: the rest ambled along). In *Palm Springs Weekend,* a sort of kiddies own *Where the Boys Are* (although even that had heavy moral overtones), Donahue takes on the form of a medical student going through college, if you please, on an athletic scholarship who in no time disperses any slight doubt one might have on the purity of his morals. Sequel should find him playing pat-a-cake with the girl on the sand! Norman Taurog won the academy award in 1931 for *Skippy*--could be Jackie Cooper never grew up? To give him his due, he also directed *You Can't Have Everything* and *Boys Town.*

Previously, Donahue has done four films with Delmer Daves (described by Richard Whitehall in his monograph a few months ago on that director as being in a genre to which he was allergic: although judging from the American receipts—they are not so successful in England, but that doesn't mean the English have better taste—the public thought otherwise). From the disturbed adolescent (!) of *A Summer Place* he emerged, through *Parrish, Susan Slade, Lovers Must Learn* as *that* all-American boy next door character whom prim mother would welcome as a son-in-law. Personally, I found them gloriously funny and so did the audiences I saw them with; best memory is that of him carting a great candelabra around in *Lovers Must Learn* as a 'mark of his integrity'. Incidentally, this last film had an abrupt cut that, in omitting a scene, implied that boy and girl spent anything but an innocent night together in mountain chalet; whereas a still from the missing sequence implies the opposite showing boy sleeping gallantly on the balcony!

One of the best stories I've heard about the attitude of film company executives



I have put many kinds of people on film. Gabin is the most 'honest' of them all—*Renoir*

Gabin as the master mind behind a plan to rob a Riviera casino, in Henri Verneuil's 'Mélodie en Sous-Sol'. He co-stars with Alain Delon, featured on this month's cover

Gabin on and off screen: Above, as the crime 'Boss' in 'Le Cave Se Rebiffe' (shown in England as 'The Counterfeiters') with Francoise Rosay. Below, he waits while the film's director, Gilles Grangier, thinks out the next scene

to produce the best films in its history.

Appropriate to this prevailing mood, Renoir's first film with Gabin was *Les Bas Fonds* (1936), adapted from Maxim Gorki's novel. 'I have put many kinds of people on film in my time, but never anyone so photogenic: he [Gabin] is a 'cinematic' force, it's fantastic, it's unlievable. but it becomes a profound honesty. He is the most honest person I have ever met in my life'. Thus spoke Renoir in a recent interview in *Cahiers du Cinéma,* and it shows that his concentration in *Les Bas Fonds* was fixed on Gabin and the type of man he represented—the son of a thief and an unashamed thief himself. Yet Pepel (Gabin) is a man who belongs in spirit to the same class as the Baron (superbly played by Louis Jouvet), who wants to mix with the murderers and madmen who congregate in the doss-house. Renoir found in Gabin the embodiment of the 'everyman' figure whom he wanted to exalt in his films.

This is borne out even more strongly in *La Grande Illusion,* where Gabin has the part of Maréchal, a mechanic who has been promoted to be an officer in the first world war and is captured by the Germans. In the presence of von Rauffenstein (Eric von Stroheim) and his own compatriot de Boeldieu (Pierre Fresnay), he is embarrassed and uneasy. He lacks urbanity, but he is thoroughly imbued with natural gallantry and dignity. There must always be different classes, Renoir is saying, but the lower order is epitomised in Maréchal, in his way just as important as the aristocracy typified by von Rauffenstein and de Boeldieu. And when it comes to the truly free things of life—the love that grows between Maréchal and the Bavarian peasant woman, the sense of cameraderie that prompts Maréchal to help his Jewish companion as they escape through the mountains—all men are fundamentally alike. The elegance, the eloquence of the gesture with which von Rauffenstein cuts the geranium to place on de Boeldieu's coffin could never be achieved by Maréchal, but the human sympathies inherent in both of them are pretty much the same. The film appears now as slightly theatrical (not so fluid even as *Les Bas Fonds*), too long, and at times poorly constructed, but it is constantly distinguished by the acting of its principal players—a stupendous performance from von Stroheim and an equally effective one in a minor key from Gabin. Part of the latter's greatness as an actor is that he never thrust himself forward in any rôle, and never seeks to dominate any film. He manages to be both humble and authoritative. In these two films of Renoir's he is lovable and humorous to an extent that would seem to belie his toughness and cynicism in, say, *Quai des Brumes.*

Yet with *La Bête Humaine* (1938), Renoir was to present Gabin in a much harsher light. Even he, such an ebullient and sympathetic director, was infected by the bitterness and pessimism that grew in the minds of Frenchmen as the prospect of yet another war became more discernible. He is reported to have said, 'To hell with Zola, I want to make a film about trains,' when he shot *La Bête Humaine.* Yet despite the obvious emphasis on the documentary aspect of the novel (the train-runs between Paris and Le Harve), the mood of the film is shot through with the fatalism that distinguishes the whole of Zola's great *oeuvre* —the inevitable erosion of the Rougeon-Macquart family. Gabin plays Lantier, the engine-driver who is possessed with a maniacal desire to kill that which attracts him most; his partner is Simone Simon, as Severine, the wife of a jealous station official, and her scenes with Gabin are wrought with a tremendous conviction. Gabin succeeds in this rôle because his screen temperament corresponds closely to that of Lantier in the novel—strong passions concealed beneath a stalwart, controlled exterior. As André Bazin has so aptly written, 'Gabin is not an actor whom one asks to portray the hero of any story. For he himself, anterior to all stories, is a hero, and it is to this hero that the imagination of the scenarist should be devoted. Gabin would never be able, no matter what the script, to portray any destiny other than his own'.

But Gabin's most illustrious work was to be under the guidance of Marcel Carné in two films which, however unimposing they may seem when viewed now, are the quintessance of the melancholy that was common to nearly all French film-makers at this time. *Quai des Brumes* (1938) was adapted by Jacques Prévert from a novel by Pierre MacOrlan about the frequenters of a café in Montmartre called Le Lapin Agile around the outbreak of the first World War, and was set in the des-

The Gabin image of the 'thirties: as the impetuous, unpredictable hero 'who will sacrifice his life in order to indulge a whim of nature'. In Marcel Carne's 'Quai des Brumes' (1938) he played opposite Michele Morgan

pondent gloom of Le Havre. Like Bergman latterly, Carné and Prévert were obsessed with the drama of the couple, fated to have their love wrecked by circumstance. We sense that Jean (Gabin) will come to a sticky end even though he appears to have been given a sudden raison d'etre by the affections of Nellie (Michèle Morgan), and sure enough he is shot in the stomach as he is about to leave on a boat for Venezuela.

It is Gabin's performance that is of primary interest. He develops the character of Jean constantly and subtly. At the start of the film he is gruff and taciturn, angry with those who make jokes and engage in small-talk. When he meets Nellie, however, he gradually thaws, and by the close of the film he has submitted almost entirely to the romantic ideals which possess him at heart. Because he wants to save Nellie from the lecherous advances of her guardian, he dashes off the boat and runs to her aid. But, in this rather visionary world of good and evil that Prévert created, the reward for Jean's goodness is death, for he is shot by a ruffian who has grown jealous of his success with Nellie. Thus once again Gabin portrays a hero who is impetuous and unpredictable, a man who will sacrifice his life in order to indulge a whim of nature. By contrast with this type of character, the Gabin of post-war years is stiff and lifeless, calculating where his pre-war personality is emotional.

In *Le Jour Se Lève* (1939), also directed by Carné, Gabin is revealed in much the same light. He plays a factory worker who has killed the former lover of his girl-friend, and sits in a dingy top-floor room waiting his inevitable capture by the police. The story is told in a series of flashbacks and ends with Gabin's committing suicide with the dawn.

Here again Gabin is depicted as the victim of fate. He is not bad at the core but is lured into crime by chance and, paradoxically, by the most upstanding traits in his nature. He represents perfectly Prévert's embodiment of spiritual defeat, and part of the reason for the magistral success of the Carné-Prévert partnership was that Carné concentrated on establishing a hard, prehensile sense of locality and character while Prévert's dialogue and situations were on a more romantic, and at times poetic, level. In *Le Jour Se Léve,* Gabin is more adherent

The solitary figure: Gabin as the domineering gangster who finds safety, but homesickness, in the Kasbah, in Julien Duvivier's 'Pepe le Moko' (1937). With him are Mireille Balin and Lucas Gridoux

During the Occupation, Gabin spent some time in Hollywood, but the only notable film he appeared in there was in Julien Duvivier's 'The Imposter' (1943)

towards the films aimed at this market, applies to a yet to-be-released-here 'teenage comedy (which American reviews imply is quite good). I'm told that at this particular film's first private showing in England, by the time the film ended all the executives (of a company which shall remain nameless, the wrath indeed can be great) had left. It's like the confectioner who sells sweets, but wouldn't dare eat his own produce.

Now in Germany, there is an even more peculiar rage in terms of the young leading man: this time of the innocent who seems to delight in being seduced by older women; mainly in the form of 19 year old Thomas Fritsch whose *Schwarz-weiss-rote Himmelbett* (directed by Rolf Thiele, who had the reverse situation and for different reasons in *Rosemarie*) ran for six months solid in Berlin; and plays a similar part in Weidenmann's *Das grosse Liebesspiel*. Schoolboys never had it so good there.

Britain should try to liven up the old game, too. How about a musical-comedy about homosexuals?

Returning to the Americans, always a good talking point, safe at least, in the category of directors primarily devoted to creating and satisfying the youthful public's demand, one can distinguish roughly between the directors who are over 60 and those who are closer in age to the generation they are dealing with. First, though, a statistic about this youthful market: recent figures show that in England for instance (and in the US the proportion is probably higher) four-fifths of the audience is under 35, and that half the total number of people who go to the cinema are under 25. In running through the list of directors who have made films featuring Donahue, Presley, something like 90 per cent are over sixty. Ten directors for the 'teens have an average of 65.6 years, while 80 per cent of their audience is under 35 years.

So to the distinctions: new ideas and treatments are invariably tried by the younger directors—look at the quite impressive performance Don Siegel had from Presley in *Flaming Star*, a minor western classic—and are in turn followed by the older brigade. The younger boys don't mind attempting a serious reflection of life as they see it, sometimes a little cynically or with an offbeat humour; the older directors prefer something pleasantly straightforward, neatly amusing (though most of the laughs come from the audience taking the writer's remarks in a way certainly not intended) and completely, utterly and wholely wholesome—all the heroes act like ten year old boys brought up by the very best families, always polite, good table manners, kind to old people and children. Now the older boys do like a little bit of violence, not much mind you, as in the case of Richard Thorpe (72) who had Presley being whipped in *Jailhouse Rock* (not so bold as Robert Webb who had him killed in his first film, *Love Me Tender*) and had him slug it out with heavy in *Fun in Acapulco*. But in Thorpe's *Follow the Boys* it was a car that got most of the beating, a poor French one at that. Gordon Douglas, however, tried and succeeded in finding a completely fresh characterisation for Presley in *Follow that Dream* (certainly the best of Douglas' comedies, infinitely preferable to his Bob Hope opus, *Call Me Bwana*) which no other director has attempted to follow. A pity for Presley's sake, maybe his *Viva Las Vegas* will revitalise him: director is George Sidney (he did *Bye Bye Birdie*), co-star is the 'female Presley' Ann-Margret (who almost got Birdie).

In a way, the cinema is ill-equiped to keep up with the ever changing fancies of the younger people: it usually takes about nine months from the start of production for a film to get into the cinemas, by which time it's potential popularity may have vanished. But it is rare for a film like the ones mentioned so far to have to wait longer, whereas those of more serious and conscientious intent like *The Leather Boys* have to wait up to 18 months. There is no delay, of course, with the indestructibles such as 007, Doctor Sparrow and the Carry On crew.

In America, topicality is rare, for filmmakers are slow in realising that ideas that were a great success in the 'thirties will not work today—*A Pocketful of Miracles* was just too lovable and sentimental for today's counterpart of those who rushed to Capra's pre-war films. Inherent in their film-society is the belief in churning out formula pictures till they reach the point of diminishing returns—the Martin and Lewis films (subsequently the Lewis comedies, all of which are claimed to have made a profit, though the future can't be too bright now that he has been paid £1m to break his television contract because his new series is not a success), the Hal Wallis vehicles for Presley, the Gidget series, Tammy, the Campus monsters, the high school werewolves, the rebels with or without causes. As these die off, the trend is to find new subjects to get the youngsters in, every new singer is quickly put under contract and then put into often unsuitable rôles (Bobby Rydell and Ann-Margret look rather older than the 15 year olds they were supposed to be playing in *Bye Bye Birdie*); and what was Frankie Avalon doing in *The Alamo?* Alternatively, producer's gambles didn't always pay off—it took some while and several film parts before Fabian ever drew much attention—the clucking hens in stereophonic sound made more impression in *Hound Dog Man* that he did. Recently in England the Tommy Steele film *It's All Happening* only received a third circuit release because Steele wasn't thought to be a great attraction anymore.

What does the immediate future hold for those evenings when the Beatles are at rest? Donahue has completed *A Distant Trumpet* (directed by 72 year old Raoul Walsh, who had a crack at teenage comedy with *A Private's Affair*). Joshua Logan (56—he tackled Jane Fonda and Tony Perkins in *Tall Story*) is doing a 'young' sequel to *Mr Roberts* called *Ensign Pulver;* stars Tommy Sands and Robert Walker Jr. Andrew Stone is bolstering up the latest of his edge of seat thrillers, *Never put it in Writing*, with Pat Boone, who also has lost some of his popularity and has tried to counteract it, rather unsuccessfully, by playing the not so nice guy who gets mixed up in vice, murder and kidnapping. But for me most unusual choice is that of William Wyler (62) to direct *The Collector*, which centres on two characters both in their early twenties played by Terence Stamp and Samanatha Eggar, and is a subject which could easily disintegrate into the usual psychopathetic vein.

Although age does not necessarily put older directors out of touch with the people they deal with, and audiences they try to appeal to, it's interesting to compare the results with those of some of the younger British directors (and French directors with their first 'autobiographical' works) like Don Sharp with *Linda* (probably the biggest surprise B-feature put out by ABC, my local audience found it far more entertaining and lively than the film it supported—*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*); Sidney Furie with *The Young Ones* (carried along by pure enthusiasm, and exhuberance as was *Play It Cool*), and Clive Donner's *Some People*. We've also seen some bright efforts by other young directors to break from a conventional formula: Frankenheimer's *The Young Strangers*, Sher's *Love in a Goldfish Bowl* (these two are the nearest the cinema has got to the flip penetration of Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*), probably Hiller's virtually lost film, *The Careless Years*, and Boïsrond's *Faibles Femmes* (released as *Women are Weak*). These at least conveyed the atmosphere of youth, which the older boys seem to find elusive.

In contrast, an example of how an established director has failed to adjust to changing moods is Edmund Goulding (he handled the MGM galaxy in *Grand Hotel*, 1932) with his misjudged attempt at a teenage musical, *Mardi Gras*.

Much seems to depend on the people the director is working with who sometimes appear to carry him along with them, bringing more to the film in terms of atmosphere, spontaneous or improvised response, and a general youthful foolhardiness than the director can create: one suspects Nicholas Ray was pretty well bolstered by his actors in *Rebel Without a Cause*.

While some of these films have acted as an excellent experimental ground for the few younger directors who have had the chance; they have not produced any really notable acting talents. Practicularly all the American films directed by the veterans have been based on the formula of presenting Brand X to the public, framed against palm tree, beach boys and designing girls. The intention: to make the brand so well known, that people go to see it. The few good young actors—Finney, Courtenay, Stockwell—keep clear.

Where and when has a critic given him a bad notice?

Jean Gabin

PETER COWIE

The star system, however deplorable it may be, has always dominated the cinema. Even on the Continent men like Jean Gabin, Albert Préjean, Raimu, Emil Jannings, and Victor Sjöstrom have been popular not so much for the rôles they have played but for their own characteristics. Jean Gabin in the 'thirties represented most of the ideals held by Frenchmen: integrity, perseverance in the face of opposition and depression, heroism in meeting death, a sense of humour, and tenderness in loving. André Bazin called him 'the tragic hero of contemporary cinema'. Since the war, his personality, like his figure, has assumed monolithic authority. He has only to walk into a room to capture a scene in any film. One of his recent directors has commented that Gabin needs to be given only brief instructions before playing a sequence in front of the cameras. He will listen in silence, stroll away from the set for a few seconds, and then speak his lines or make his gestures in precisely the right manner. He almost senses in what tone and at what level he should act. He feels, more than he engineers, his playing.

Like his contemporary Spencer Tracy, Gabin has improved in competence if not in inspiration during the latter half of his career. Like Tracy, too, he has scarcely ever received a bad critical notice. His dream as a schoolboy was to be an engine-driver, but his father, a vaudeville comedian, virtually dragooned him into taking a job as a dancer at the Folies Bergères. Mistinguett was responsible for giving him his first big 'name,' for in 1927 she engaged him to be her partner in a show at the Folies Bergères and it was not long before he made his first film, called, somewhat suitably, *Chacun Sa Chance*.

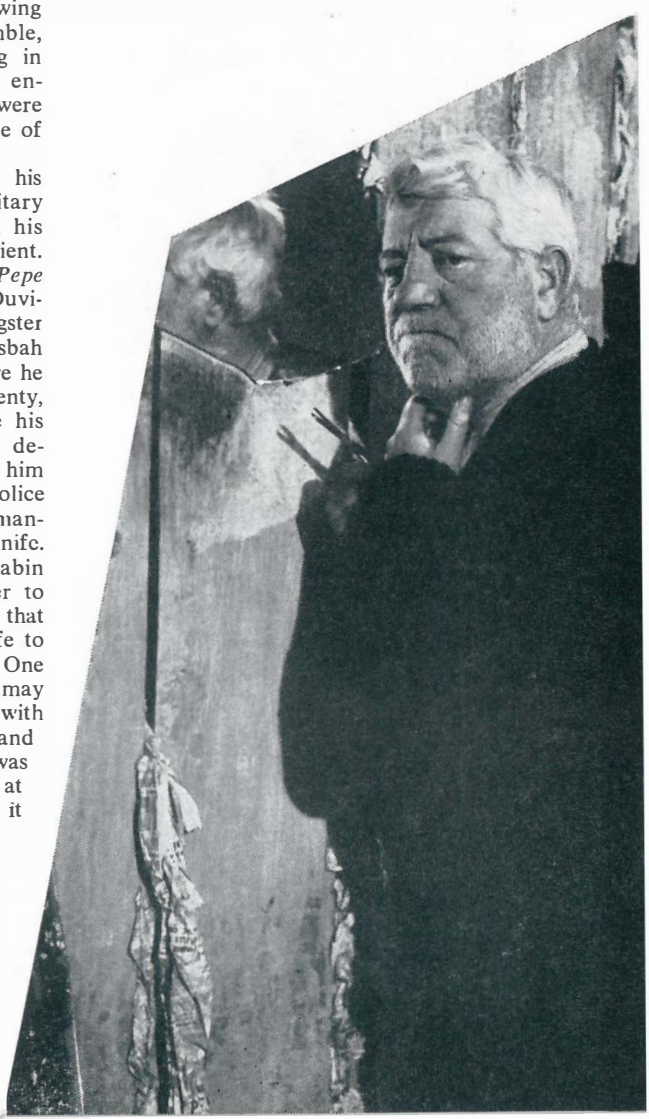
But these early films were not outstanding, and relied heavily on Gabin's rather limited talent as a comedian. His first dramatic part was in Anatole Litvak's *Coeur des Lilas* in 1931, and from then on throughout the 'thirties he was a tragic figure, usually meeting his death at the end of a film. Jacques Prévert has epitomised his position in this poem:

> Jean Gabin
> acteur tragique du Paris
> gentleman du cinéma élizabéthain
> dans la péripherie du film quotidien.

La Bandera, La Belle Equipe, Les Bas Fonds, Pepe Le Moko, La Grande Illusion, La Bête Humaine, Quai des Brumes, Le Jour Se Lève . . . It is a formidable string of films, and Gabin took the leading part in nearly every one of them. It was his vintage period, when, like Tracy, he contrived to play with uncanny assurance in films that without exception enjoyed tremendous success, both critical and commercial. If Carné and Duvivier presented him as a symbol of tragedy, Renoir and Grémillon presented him as a symbol of humanity. His authority and influence were noticed for the first time in Duvivier's *La Bandera* (1935), where he played a criminal who sought refuge in the Spanish Foreign Legion, commanded by General Franco, to whom Duvivier dedicated the film.

Renoir wanted to make *La Belle Equipe*, but Duvivier obtained the rights first, and again cast Gabin in the lead, this time as one of five unemployed men who win 100,000 francs in a sweepstake and invest them in a riverside café, which they build themselves. The film was, of course, very didactic, intent on showing that a group of men, however humble, however depressed, could by working in harness cure the malaise that was encroaching on French society. There were two endings to *La Belle Equipe* in one of which Gabin finished as a murderer.

But Gabin's importance is that in his best films he is recognised as a solitary figure, resentful of any intrusion on his life or affairs, strong, silent, and resilient. This is why he is so memorable in *Pepe le Moko* (1937), his third film for Duvivier. He plays a domineering gangster who flees from the police to the Kasbah in the native quarter of Algiers. There he finds drink, friends, and lovers in plenty, but they do not satisfy him. Despite his safety, homesickness and a romantic desire for the girl of his dreams impel him to go down to the town, where the police handcuff him at the dock gates. He manages to kill himself with his pen-knife. Here in essence is the ethos which Gabin stood for in the 'thirties. It is better to die for an ideal—however personal that ideal may be—than to allow one's life to ebb away in boredom and inactivity. One is destined to die anyway, and so one may as well go out with a bang and not with a whimper. Such was the fatalism and feeling of disillusionment that was rapidly pervading French cinema at this period. Paradoxically, it caused it



Jean Gabin won a Silver Bear for his portrayal of the jolly tramp who tries to get arrested so he can spend the winter in the warmth of prison in 'Archimede, Le Clochard' (1959). directed by Gilles Grangier

to Prévert than Carné. The late Richard Winnington described him as 'a contemporary, mature figure of tragedy and disillusionment in whom the instincts of a poet are choked'. Even beside the superbly drawn characters of the circus-trainer and his mistress (Arletty), Gabin is a gigantic figure, delivering Prévert's apophthegms and soliloquies on the inevitablity of fate and the tragi-comedy of human existence with an assurance and mocking manner that prevents them from becoming too high-flown or pedantic.

In most of these early films, Gabin represents the common man who has the misfortune to think too deeply about life and its misfortunes. Yet he also has the ability not to ignore but to despise whatever bad ending there will be.

His only other noteworthy rôles before the war were in Jean Grémillon's *Gueule d'Amour* (1937) and *Remorques* (1939). Both were beautifully written, the first by Charles Spaak, who had done such good work for Renoir, and the second by Jacques Prévert (though André Cayatte adapted it for the screen). Not surprisingly, Gabin emerged as a figure strongly akin to Jean in *Quai des Brumes,* thanks to Prévert's writing. The unavailing struggle of the couple to enjoy their love was also re-emphasised, and Michèle Morgan even played opposite Gabin as she had done at the age of eighteen in *Quai des Brumes.* Grémillon directed the exteriors of *Remorques* during the final months of 1939 and only completed Gabin's part just before the collapse of France. Late in 1940 Gremillon obtained permission from the occupying Germans to finish the film and the version in existence today appeared in November, 1941.

Gabin was a sea-captain in a salvage ship at Brest in *Remorques;* in *Gueule d'Amour* he played a handsome soldier, but with a very similar fate. Grémillon's great strength lay in creating creditable figures in his work, and in *Gueule d'Amour,* made in Germany, he showed Gabin as a Legionnaire in Toulon who expects a woman to bring him peace and help but finds that instead, she brings destruction in her train. This was one of the films that enraged the Right-wingers in France because it reflected French arms in a poor light. The French Left on the other hand, consistently used Gabin as a symbol of French defeatism throughout the 'thirties.

Gabin had an unfortunate stay in America during the war, when his only film worth mentioning was *The Imposter,* made in 1943 by Duvivier, who with so many others had fled to Hollywood during the Occupation. Like Henry Fonda, Gabin took time to find his feet in the post-war years, and did not have a truly successful rôle until 1948, when he went to Italy with René Clement and starred in the latter's *Au-dela des Grilles,* which won the prize for the best direction at the Cannes festival in the following year. But it was ill-scripted and only technically brilliant. The first signs of grey have entered Gabin's hair; he is unkempt and unshaven; he is a ruffian on the run from the police in Genoa. But now he faces his fate with a resignation and cynicism that was absent in his earlier films. With *Marie du Port* (1949), Gabin at last slipped into the mould in which he has remained ever since—the ageing, confident man, used to success, who becomes involved in an affair with a younger woman or in a shady crime. Simenon, of course, is an expert at drawing such a figure, and his novel is set on the Brittany coast, where Gabin owns a shabby restaurant (he is also a restaurateur in Duvivier's *Murder A La Carte*) and is enticed by his mistress's young sister. Gabin has also interpreted a Simenon hero in *Maigret Sets a Trap* (1957). Apart from a terse, brightly-written part in Max Ophüls' *méiange, Le Plaisir* (1951), Gabin's next striking rôle was in *Touchez-Pas Au Grisbi* (released in England under the title of *Honour Among Thieves*), a minor product from Jacques Becker, but symptomatic of Gabin's immurement in parts that were no longer virtuous but faintly sordid and uninspiring (Jean Servais has suffered similarly). He plays Max, the tired, bored boss of a gang of thieves, who is lured into violence for just one more time. Becker used so much underworld slang in the film that he felt it might be necessary to have subtitles to explain the dialogue to his countrymen. The story was taken from an actual robbery of gold bars from Orly airport. Most Frenchmen would probably prefer this image of Gabin now than that of his pre-war films. Pierre Lazareff, the critic of *France-Soir,* commented significantly, 'One must have seen Jean Gabin in the rôle of "Max," just as one must have seen Lillian Gish in *Broken Blossoms,* or Charlie Chaplin in *The Gold Rush*'.

Razzia Sur le Chnouff was of a similarly sordid nature, and Gabin was the leader of a dope-peddling gang. A rôle that suited him much more, and which brought him once again under the tutelage of Jean Renoir, was in *French Can-Can* (1954). Personally I regard this film as one of Renoir's worst efforts, on a par with *The River,* but amid all the gory, glossy cliches of backstage gossip and love-affairs, Gabin's impresario stands rock-like and eupeptic. He is the model of sophistication in his sly courtship of the leading dancer (Françoise Arnoul) at the Moulin Rouge.

In the modernised version of *Crime and Punishment* (1956), Gabin was the sympathetic detective who tracked down the murderer, and in *The Case of Dr Laurent* he grew even more malleable, charming, and gentle. This latter film shows him in what is perhaps the most humane rôle of his entire career. Jean Le Chanois' direction is unimaginative for most of the time, but this only affords Gabin more opportunity to dominate the film, which tells how an elderly doctor's progressive thought and faith in natural childbirth saves at least one mother in a remote mountain village. One feels that it is in this type of film that Gabin is most aptly cast, but his versatility defies any attempt to pigeon-hole him in this way. In 1957, for instance, he played with superb control and candour the anxious lawyer who is attracted by Brigitte Bardot in *En Cas de Malheur* (*Love is my Profession*). Ever since then Gabin's films have been scripted wholly or in part by Michel Audiard; Gabin calls him '*my* dialogue writer'.

Le Président (1961) is typical of the type of film (*Le Baron de l'Ecluse* and *Les Grandes Familles*) that has proved an excellent box-office vehicle for Gabin. He plays a rotund ailing ex-Premier who manages to control politics even after his retirement thanks to blackmail and shrewdness. As he dictates his memoirs, a series of flashbacks show him magistral in the National Assembly, jocular and Machiavellian in his Cabinet meetings. The film is an adaptation of a Simenon novelette and Gabin is blessed with some wonderful lines like this retort to a sycophantic lady companion at a concert, 'Wagner can be sublime or unbearable, but never, Madame, exquisite!' He is completely at home as the politician who can be well-mannered and humorous and yet quite willing to crush anyone who stands in his way. Thus Gabin in this second and equally popular phase of his career is ideal as a respectable pillar of the community who beneath his dignified exterior has a wily intuition and a mischievous sense of humour.

Inevitably, therefore, one must mention Gabin's talent as a comedian. In his youthful films it seemed rather thin; now, in the twilight of his career, he has revealed an engaging flair for carrying an amusing story single-handed. Autant-Lara is an excellent director of comedies, and this in part explains the high level on which many of the sequences in *La Traversée de Paris* (1956) were played. Gabin was cast as an unkempt artist who gets enmeshed in the wartime black-market. Similarly, in *Archiméde, Le Clochard* (1959), he is a jolly tramp whose chief desire is to get arrested so that he can spend a nice warm winter in prison. His performance secured him a Silver Bear at the Berlin Festival three years ago, and in a way it is typical of his career because whenever Gabin appears to be playing a rôle mechanically, he is in fact striving very hard to ensure that everything goes well in his performance. It is one of the secrets of his success that every part he plays seems natural to him. Yet if one studies his career as a whole, it is soon obvious that he has been represented in all guises, and as all kinds of personalities—from soldier to tramp and from murderer to detective. For many Frenchmen, he is a national institution. For cinephiles all over the world, he should be respected as a model of unflagging application to his craft.

CRIME INC.

A three part dossier on
the American gangster film

by RICHARD WHITEHALL

PART TWO: G-Men and Gangsters

'A nationwide crime syndicate does exist in the United States despite the protestations of a strangely assorted company of criminals, self-serving politicians, plain blind fools, and others who may be honestly misguided, that there is no such combine', Senator Estes Kefauver wrote in his book, *Crime in America*, after the senatorial investigations which occupied so much time and newspaper and television space in 1950-51. Perhaps it would be as well to trace, briefly, the origins of the Syndicate.

The first organized gang was the Five Pointers which came into being in New York around 1840, and for many years thereafter the gangsters, mainly of Irish extraction, were held together by racial ties and political affiliations, closely tied to Tammany politics. Elements of the Neopolitan Camorra and the Sicilian Mafia came in on the great nineteenth-century wave of immigration—there is a graphic picture of the Black Hand in New York's Little Italy during the early years of the century in Richard Wilson's excellent *Pay or Die*, based on the true story of Lieutenant Joe Petrosino (Ernest Borgnine) who was finally shot down in Palermo in 1909 — but for many years they only preyed on their own people.

These early gangs operated within a restricted area, a few blocks, dependent on the goodwill of the politicians, for whom they were messenger boys and odd-job men, intimidating witnesses or helping rig an election by stuffing, or stealing, ballot-boxes. Their first move up the scale came when big business enlisted their services as strike-breakers in the years

ILLUSTRATED: *Above—Lee Marvin and Gloria Grahame in Fritz Lang's 'The Big Heat' (1953). Below—the Dead End Kids with James Cagney in Michael Curtiz' 'Angels with Dirty Faces' (1938)*

George Raft (left) and Edward Arnold (right) in Frank Tuttle's 'The Glass Key' (1935)— 'entirely amoral, beautifully made'

just prior to the war and the unions, for their own protection, were forced to enlist hoodlums—sometimes the big bosses were supplying the strong-arm men to both sides in an industrial dispute. Prohibition changed the status of the gangsters; from being the servants they became the masters (until Al Capone, at the height of his power, could kick a mayor down the steps of his own City Hall for not obeying orders fast enough).

The tightly-knit modern gang, with its chain of command, seems to have been the inspiration of Arnold Rothstein, the gambler who bankrolled so many rackets before he was shot in 1928. With the passing of the Volstead Act, Rothstein saw the pickings that were to be obtained in rum-running. He financed the purchase of a fleet of fast craft, set up a network of wholesalers, and generally organized bootlegging into the system it was to follow until 1933. His interests were protected by a group of mobsters headed by Jack Diamond and his brother, Eddie. Unfortunately neither Boetticher's *The Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond* nor Joseph Newman's *The Big Bankroll* gave any credit for their pioneering activities to their respective heroes.

The intergang warfare of the 'twenties (five hundred gangsters were killed in Chicago alone in less than five years) with the mobs sniping at their rivals, hi-jacking each other's supplies, was seen by some to be both wasteful and unnecessary. In May 1929, a business convention was held in Atlantic City attended by the gang-bosses of the various cities, at which the first plans for a nationwide cartel of crime, taking in gambling, prostitution, extortion, labour racketeering, as well as bootlegging were outlined. These plans were not really finalised until 1934 when the Syndicate came into being after the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment had cut into their principal source of profit, bootlegging, and had turned the gangsters towards the equally profitable narcotics. First the east and mid-west formed into a loose but effective alliance, of which the Brooklyn-based strong-arm section was to become the most notorious as Murder Inc (this name, which has stuck, was inspired by the New York newspaperman, Harry Feiney: 'It's just like Bethlehem Steel. It has a board of directors, a treasurer, and runs like a big syndicate'). In 1937 Buggsy Seigal was sent west to organize California and the gambling cities of the far west. By 1936 Warners, which so often took its stories from the newpaper headlines, was on the track of the Syndicate in *Bullets or Ballots* ('The first big drama of the Secret Syndicate of Crime that supplants the Public Enemies as the Nation's Number One Menace' ran the American ads for the film).

The gangster, who had been pushed off the screen after *Scarface*, had not disappeared with Prohibition, as was hoped, but had merely shifted his stance. The flamboyant Al Capone, who loved publicity and played up to it, had been succeeded by a group of shadowy individuals who preferred that their names and activities should be secret. The spotlight fell on that series of public enemies from Dillinger onwards who became equated with crime in the public mind. These public enemies were never really that in a true sense, more publicized but less dangerous than the *capo mafiosi* they were the result of a brilliant bit of publicity mongering by that high-pressure salesman for the FBI, J Edgar Hoover. Organized crime flourished, but it was the mavericks who got all the notoriety.

The gangster film, which had died out in 1932-3, was back in full flood in 1935, but with one essential difference, the gangster himself as a hero-figure had been displaced by the straight shooting and the high ideals of the G-Man (the name had been given to FBI agents by Machine Gun Kelly at his capture in September 1933, when he had called 'Don't shoot, G men! Don't shoot, G men!') beginning with William Keighley's *G-Men* (1935) the first of the cycle and unabashed propaganda for the FBI. 'It's all here! Before your eyes is re-enacted every heroic episode in America's war-to-the-death with Crime! It's real! Stirring! Breath-taking! And it tells *everything* that happened right from the day Uncle Sam wrote the death decree of the Public Enemy by sending Special Agents of the Department of Justice out to fight him with his own bloody weapons', ran the ads for the Regal (now Odeon), Marble Arch, at the film's British premiere.

The success of *G-Men* set the second gangster cycle into high gear, as violent as its predecessor but this time the pressure groups could hardly object, the films were almost solidly on the side of law and order and the government agencies, and did much to build up the myth of the omnipotence of the FBI (Hoover has claimed that the FBI secures from 94-97½ per cent convictions in the cases it investigates, but the Brookings Institution in an

The gangster was displaced as the hero-figure by the high ideals of the G-Man in the first of a cycle of propaganda for the FBI, William Keighley's 'G-Men' (1935)

independent survey at a time Hoover was claiming 94.35 per cent convictions revised these figures to 72.5 per cent—which, at the time, placed its ratio of successes below those of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the Secret Service, the Alcoholics Tax Unit, the Post Office Inspection Service, and the Internal Revenue Bureau).

Sam Wood's *False Faces* (1935) dealt with the enrolment of three young G-Men and their progress through their first assignment, the projected kidnapping of a society girl (Virginia Bruce) by her chauffeur (Bruce Cabot) who is, in reality, a dangerous public enemy and the leader of a gang. The title is taken from Cabot's undergoing an operation for plastic surgery so that his features may be changed, but there is a grim climax when the gangster sees himself in a mirror afterwards and realises that the doctor has betrayed him by deliberately scarring the gangster's face rather than changing it. J Walter Rubin's *Public Hero Number One* (1935) has Chester Morris as an agent who is sent to jail to win the confidence of a crook, Sonny (Joseph Calleia) who is believed to be a big-name in the underworld. The undercover man not only spends 21 days in solitary to make his story more convincing, he also kidnaps the entire prison commission in their car when he and the killer escape. The climax is based on Dillinger's end, and takes place in a theatre where the killer has been watching a monkey act.

There was even John Ford's *The Whole Town's Talking* (1935—shown in Britain as *Passport to Shame*) in which Edward G Robinson had the dual rôles of Arthur Jones, the mild mannered little clerk in a hardware company, and his exact double Killer Mannion, a gangster who has just escaped from jail. At least Ford played his film for comedy, which was more than James Cruze did when he came to handle similar material in *Gangs of New York* (1938), in which Charles Bickford played 'Rocky' Thorpe, a gangleader, and John Franklin, a G-Man, who are so much alike the former's gang are ready to accept the latter as their chief.

William Keighley's *Bullets or Ballots* (1936) had Edward G Robinson as an ex-cop who works his way into the Syndicate in order to destroy it, and the film touches on the political, financial, and social interests which profit from the mobs operation, and whose influence permits the graft and the rackets to continue; but the real surprise of this period, which has never been given a nod of recognition (even by the critics at the time) is Frank Tuttle's excellent version of Dashiell Hammet's *The Glass Key* (1935), entirely amoral, beautifully made (superb low-key photography by Henry Sharp, a biting script by Kubec Glasmon who had co-scripted *Public Enemy*), later tidied up for remake as an Alan Ladd-Veronica Lake vehicle by Stuart Heisler in 1942 which, although it had one or two memorable moments (Ladd's plunge through a glass roof, the performance by William Bendix, an improvement on Guinn William's earlier portrayal) is much inferior to Tuttle's version.

The high point of this second cycle though was reached with Michael Curtiz' *Angels With Dirty Faces* (1939), perhaps the best gangster film since *Scarface*. The evidence of Curtiz' declining years cannot be stricken from the record, but it shouldn't be taken as strong enough to write off those Burbank days (his farewell with *The Comancheros* was, however, excellent, even when the credit for the excellence of the action scenes has been given to Cliff Lyons) when this prolific director was turning out more, and more good, celluloid than almost anyone in Hollywood. His work became irritatingly mannered after *Young Man of Music*, and his powerful sense of composition never really adjusted to the dimensions of the wide screen, but at its best his work has a unique flavour and style of its own (*Robin Hood, Angels With Dirty Faces, Casablanca, Mildred Pierce*, all in totally different genres are obviously the work of the same man).

Curtiz had magnificent material to work with on *Angels With Dirty Faces*, an original story by Rowland Brown, a superb cast which included George Bancroft (from the Von Sternberg gangster films), James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, the Dead End Kids before their transformation into the Bowery Boys (and the oldest juveniles in history). The story deals with the gangster, Rocky Sullivan (Cagney) and his return to the slum neighbourhood of his childhood, where he has become a hero to the neighbourhood kids. Rocky's boyhood friend, now a priest (Pat O'Brien) fights Rocky's influence, mostly without success, but the climax of the film finds Rocky condemned to the electric chair for murder. Father Jerry persuades Rocky to destroy his own heroic image for the sake of the boys and their future. ('You've been a hero to them in life, and if you go to the chair without a quiver you'll be a hero to them in death. I want them to despise your memory. They've got to be ashamed of you').

Heroes don't happen by accident. They reflect the social conditions and needs of their audience. The gangster in those intermediate years was a hero in transition: many of his more aggresive traits had been given to the guardians of law and order, and he was usually shown as a hoodlum. Losing his raison d'etre he had still kept his audience appeal partly because of the powerful presence of Humphrey Bogart, the great killer-figure of the late 'thirties (Raft, Robinson, and Cagney were still around but were only intermittently criminal). With the arrest of Alvin 'Kreepy' Karpis in 1936 the last of the Public Enemies was behind bars. Dewey had exposed the rackets in 1935-6, and it wasn't until Burton Turkus, the Brooklyn assistant DA, put the spotlight on Murder Inc in 1940 that the Syndicate was shown to be a hydra-headed monster. It is significant that the late 'thirties produced so many gangster comedies for, when a figure of menace is no longer seen as a threat, he almost invariably becomes a buffoon. Prohibition had made the gangster a popular hero because he was fulfilling a social need, but after 1933 this was no longer true. The people who had willingly bought hooch recognized the social evil of heroin.

The gangster as hero, where he survived, did so as the survival of a Prohibition figure (Bogart in *High Sierra*). When Hollywood came to tackle the Syndicate in the 'fifties, most notably in Lang's *The Big Heat*, the films were almost invariably built around the lone figure waging a moral battle against corruption (particularly Phil Karlson's *The Phenix City Story*, where the hero finds the whole community ranged against him, corrupted by the racketeers) even if the hero, as in Fuller's *Underworld USA* was himself partially corrupt.

The ambivilance of the attitude during the middle and the late 'thirties is best seen in that very bad film Archie Mayo extracted from Robert Sherwood's stage success, *The Petrified Forest* (1936). 'The last great apostle of rugged individualism,' the intellectual (Leslie Howard) says of the gangster, Duke Mantee (Bogart), with more than a touch of admiration (the same thing comes through in Charley Grapewin's explanation of why Mantee is a desperado rather than a gangster: 'Gangsters are foreigners, he's an American'). The film is never quite sure just where to place Mantee, but Bogart's characteristically strong performance finally tips the scales by making him the most complex and interesting character in the work.

Bogart is as much part of the gangster film as Cagney or Robinson or Raft. He snarled and killed his way through the late 'thirties with a compulsive villainy,

Cagney sitting in his mother's lap) is sketched in without the usual sentimentality. A fine script by Ivan Goff and Ben Roberts, some excellent acting, particularly by Cagney and Steve Cochran, and Walsh's direction, all added up to a film which ought to have captured attention. That it didn't is partly due to the surfeit of wartime violence people had just had—the gangster type of film smacked unpleasantly of living for kicks—so *White Heat* is another notable 'lost film'.

When the story came up again in Leslie Martinson's *The Law Versus Gangsters* (1959), shot for television but shown in Britain as a second feature, the quality of the original was all too apparent, for whole chunks of the Walsh film, including the entire climax, were bodily transferred (the later film was also filled with the smooth, anonymous, unlived-in faces that seem to proliferate on TV whereas the cinema's gangsters and their girls have always thrived on individuality). Still, nothing discouraged, Warners tried to turn the trick with *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* (1950), directed by Gordon Douglas, and with Cagney as a killer escaped from prison who plays two women off against each other (Barbara Payton as a good 'bad woman' and Helena Carter as a bad 'good woman') and, amongst other things, bribes police chiefs as in the good old days when Al was boss.

Edward G had likewise returned to the genre in the late 'forties, and his Johnny Rocco in John Huston's *Key Largo* (1948) is one of his best performances. This taut, beautifully controlled film is flawed by its basic material, an adaptation of Maxwell Anderson's 1939 verse play in which Paul Muni had played a disillusioned hero of the Spanish Civil War, a rôle subsequently made over for Humphrey Bogart, and finely played by him. The villains in the original piece had been a group of banditti headed by one Murillo, a big-shot gambler who is moving into the Florida Keys trying to fleece tourists with a crooked roulette game (the details of this were as mysterious as those of the 'numbers racket' dealt with in Abraham Polonsky's *Force of Evil*). Richard Brooks and Huston, the scriptwriters, made them over into gangsters meeting to welcome a former big-shot in the rackets, an Al Capone/Lucky Luciano type, who is returning illegally after being deported ('After being in the USA more than thirty years they threw me out of the country as an undesirable alien—like I was a dirty Red or something').

This study of the megalomaniac Rocco, slapping his mistress around, given to violent jabs of hatred and distrust, is a convincing picture of a power-complex in disintegration, what is much less convincing is the attempt to convert him into some sort of symbol of evil. Rocco is pathetic and dangerous in about equal proportions, but attempts to symbolise him as some sort of beast from 50,000 fathoms coming out of the sea to menace civilization simply don't go with the figure we see on the screen (there's a magnificent first shot of him in his bath, unlovable but essentially vulnerable without his trappings of power, the revolver, the sawn-off shotgun, the sub-machine gun).

But there was abundant life in Little Caesar yet, and Robinson was to mine it superbly in his Vince 'King' Canelli in Hugo Fregonese's *Black Tuesday* (1955). This is one of those minor masterpieces in which the American cinema is so rich, and which makes it by far the most interesting of all national cinemas to study (ideally, of course, this series should have been written by an American, but so many of them remain curiously unimpressed by the richness of their heritage). *Black Tuesday* is one of the tightest constructed of films in an era when films had already begun to run to fat, stretching content to breaking point, but from its impressive pre-title sequence set on Death Row, with the condemned men pacing up and down their narrow cells and the Negro singing his 'Black Tuesday' song on the soundtrack, to the wholesale slaughter of its final sequence, the film is practically faultless. Built around a text taken from Matthew, 'They that live by the sword shall perish by the sword', the work is utterly ruthless, with its studied, formal groupings by Fregonese, the magnificent monochrome photography by Stanley Cortez with its violent blacks and startling whites, and the bars of shadow which cut across the images giving them, at times, an almost three dimensional look.

Sidney Boehm's screenplay avoids sentiment, capping his work in *The Big Heat* (where the domestic interiors are not overly convincing), working in some bitter and striking moments of black comedy—the most striking has Canelli running a cold eye along a group of hostages, and selecting a 'volunteer' donor with 'You ought to be good for a gallon of blood'. Canelli is the last of the big-shot gangsters, at last indicted and convicted for his fifteen murders, completely cold-blooded apart from one moment of compassion when, after the woman who has stood by him for years (Jean Parker) has been killed, he passes his hand over her hair. It is the last of the classic gangster films to give the gangster some sort of heroic stature (there is a doomed, tragic power in the whole conception of Canelli), and it was one of the best.

During the 'fifties, however, there had been a sub-genre of anti-Syndicate films inspired by the Kefauver investigations, with Joseph Kane's *Hoodlum Empire* (1952) being a detailed recreation of a congressional committee investigating crime, onto which had been tacked a long-winded and not overly convincing story of a racketeer's nephew, believed to be his big-shot uncle's right-hand-man, but actually innocent. Much better was Bretaigne Windust's *The Enforcer* (1951—shown in Britain as *Murder Inc*), an interesting non-romantic picture of a mass-murder organization which at times—as when Bogart and his associates examine a heap of victims shoes piled on a table—captures something of the cold horror of an Auschwitz newsreel. The film draws its strength from the matter-of-fact semi-documentary approach (even the flashbacks within flashbacks are neither confusing nor irritating), treating its material without sensationalism, but infinitely more complex, because it concerned itself with moral questions, was Lang's *The Big Heat* (1953).

There is no one more skilled than Lang at suggesting a conspiracy of evil, and here he had his most congenial material for some years and, consequently, turned out one of his best films. Boehm's screenplay builds up a complex picture of corruption and the opportunities for corruption in the American system of elective office ('I'm only an appointed official', the Commissioner of Police remarks, and he is shown throughout as a venal politician running the racketeer's errands).

There were a cluster of films in this sub-genre, most of them low-budget, some of them excellent, around the early 'fifties, and the genre doesn't seem to have played itself out until the end of the decade. Lewis Milestone's old *The Racket* came up again, not too well refurbished, in a 1951 version by John Cromwell, with Robert Ryan in the Louis Wolheim rôle, Robert Mitchum replacing Meighan, and the Marie Prevost rôle made over to the requirements of Lizabeth Scott.

Robert Wise's *The Captive City,* Phil Karlson's *The Phenix City Story,* Paul Wendkos' *The Case Against Brooklyn* were excellent, but the cycle also trailed through such poor to pretty bad films as Robert Gordon's *Damn Citizen,* Sidney Salkow's *Chicago Confidential,* Harold Schuster's *Portland Expose,* Lewis Seiler's *True Story of Lynn Stuart,* Mel Well's *Killers Cage,* and Edward Cahn's *Inside the Mafia* (built around the inter-Syndicate rivalry which led to the slaying of Albert Anastasia—one of the heads of Murder Inc—in a hotel barber shop in 1957). One of the most interesting projects, the Ben Hecht screenplay taken from Frederic Sondern's book, *Brotherhood of Evil,* the story of the arrest of a large group of mafiosi who had gathered in the rural New York State town of Appalachan to carve out their preserves, never went before the camera (twenty of the Appalachian mobsters were convicted, but their convictions were set aside on appeal, and it is known that at least two conventions of mafiosi have been held since then, the most important in Las Vegas in November 1960—there is plenty of evidence that the Las Vegas gambling is largely racketeer controlled).

This cycle of the gangster film now seems to have worked itself out in favour of the historical reconstructions which began with Walsh's *The Roaring Twenties,* but which really hit full flood after *The Untouchables* had become one of the highest rated shows on American TV, a position it held for several seasons. The gangster had become part of American folk-lore.

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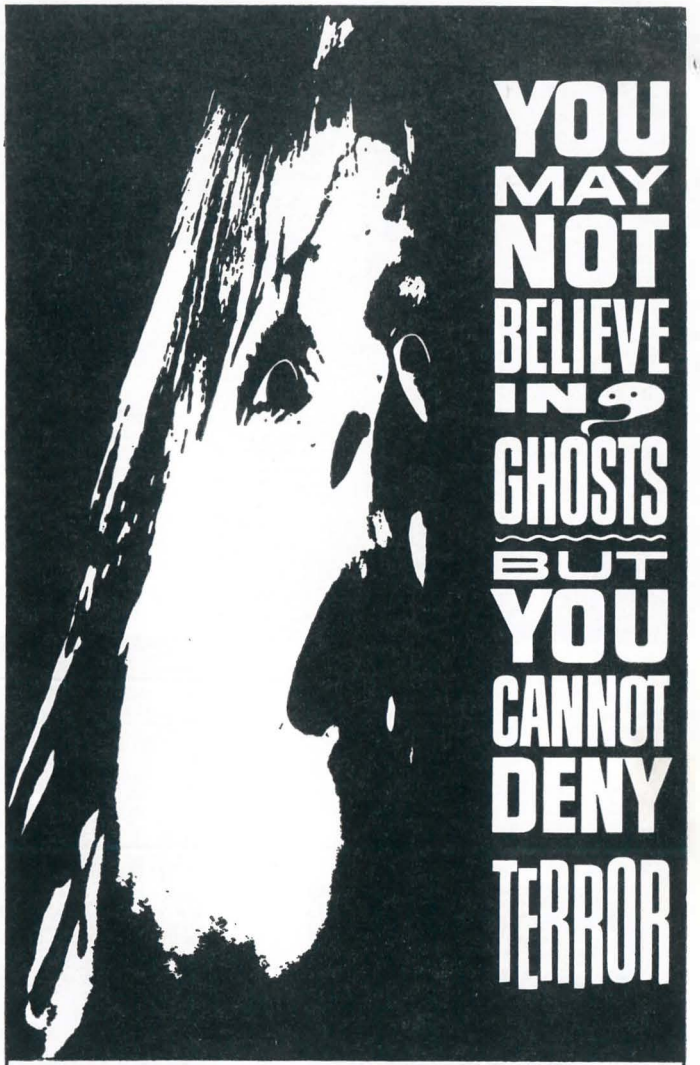
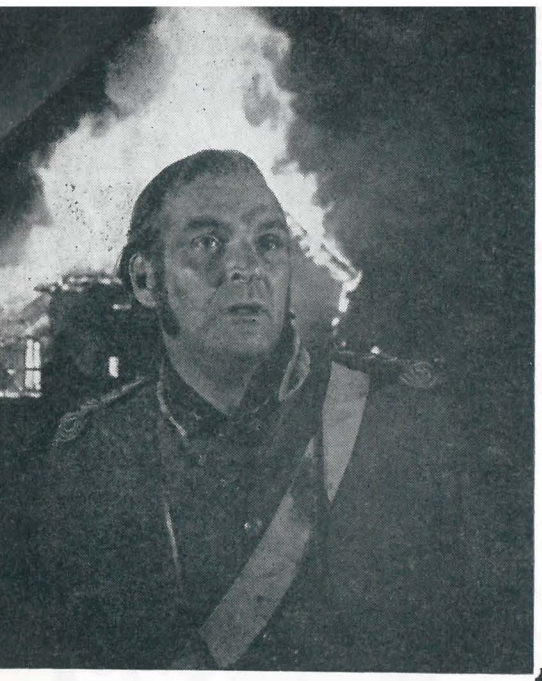


METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER presents A ROBERT WISE PRODUCTION

STARRING JULIE HARRIS · CLAIRE BLOOM · RICHARD JOHNSON
RUSS TAMBLYN · DIRECTED BY ROBERT WISE (Director of West Side Story) · SCREEN PLAY BY NELSON GIDDING
BASED ON THE NOVEL The Haunting of Hill House by SHIRLEY JACKSON
AN ARGYLE ENTERPRISES PICTURE
IN PANAVISION®

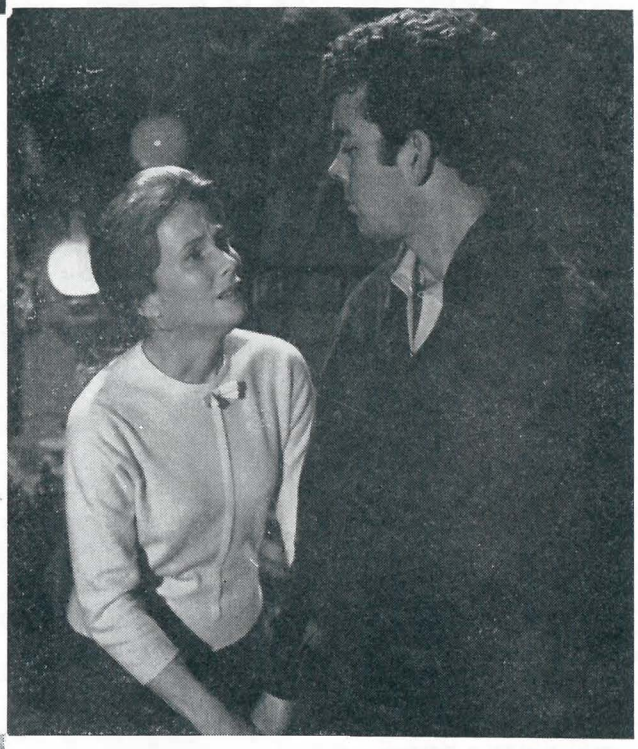
DON'T MISS its haunting thrills
...Released from JAN. 19



Zulu: Stanley Baker as one of the eleven who won VCs for their defence of Rorke's Drift. Directed by Cy Endfield; produced by Baker and Endfield

Palm Springs Weekend: the not unfamiliar gag about the confusion caused when detergent is emptied into a swimming pool. Victims, Troy Donahue and Jerry van Dyck; Director, Norman Taurog

From the new films



The Haunting: Julie Harris, as Eleanor, fails to convince a young sceptic (Russ Tamblyn) that Hill House was calling to her; directed by Robert Wise

4 For Texas: Frank Sinatra as the successful opportunist with Anita Ekberg in Robert Aldrich's comedy-western

The Cardinal: John Huston as Cardinal Glennon in Otto Preminger's film about the struggle of a Boston priest (Tom Tryon)

FILMS AND FILMING filmguide

★★★not to be missed ★★highly recommended ★recommended

best in London

***The Balcony:** based on Genet's play about house of illusion where people live out their dreams. Directed by Joseph Strick. Academy late night shows. Reviewed November, 1963, page 20.

***The Leopard:** Visconti's view of the decline of the Sicilian nobility. With Burt Lancaster Alain Delon and Claudia Cardinale. Rialto. Reviewed December 1963, page 24.

David and Lisa: psychological study of young misfits, directed by Frank Perry. With Keir Dullea and Howard Da Silva. Academy. Reviewed this issue, page 27.

***Tom Jones:** Tony Richardson's first period film, from the Fielding novel. With Albert Finney, Susannah York, Dame Edith Evans. London Pavilion. Reviewed August, 1963, page 21.

***Dr Strangelove:** Kubrick's nightmare comedy about the Bomb, with Peter Sellers and George C. Scott. Columbia from January 29. Reviewed this issue, page 26.

The Leather Boys: directed by Sidney Furie; with Rita Tushingham, Colin Campbell and Dudley Sutton. Empire, from January 23. Reviewed January, 1964, page 24.

***Lawrence of Arabia:** two years in Lawrence's life. Directed by David Lean. With Peter O'Toole and Alec Guinness. Metropole. Reviewed February 1963, page 32.

*The Pink Panther: comedy about jewel thief directed by Blake Edwards, with David Niven, Peter Sellers and Claudia Cardinale. Odeon, Leicester-sq. Reviewed this issue, page 30.

best at your local

GENERAL RELEASE

**The Servant: directed by Joseph Losey. With Dirk Bogarde as the manservant who brings about the moral decline of his master. ABC release from February 10. Reviewed December, 1963.

*The Pink Panther: Inspector (Peter Sellers) tries to unmask jewel thief (David Niven). Directed by Blake Edwards. Rank release from February 3. Reviewed this issue.

*Kiss of the Vampire: fresh blood for the cult supplied by director Don Sharp: features Clifford Evans and Noel Willman. ABC release from January 27. Reviewed this issue.

*West Side Story: directors, Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins; Stars. Natalie Wood and Russ Tamblyn. Rank release from January 20. Reviewed April, 1962.

LIMITED RELEASE

**Family Diary: Valerio Zurlini's sad. but poetic. film about two brothers suffering from bad health and oppression. With Marcello Mastroianni and Jacques Perrin. Reviewed January, 1964.

A Look at Antonioni
Five of Antonioni's films will be shown for one week each at the Everyman, Hampstead from February 3.
February 3 *Le Amiche*
February 10 *Il Grido*
February 17 *L'Avventura*
February 24 *La Notte*
March 2 *L'Ecclisse*

general releases

MONTH OF ORIGINAL REVIEW IN PARENTHESIS

January 13
ABC *What a Crazy World* (January, 1964)/*Gunfight at Comanche Creek* (this issue)
RANK *The Thrill of it All* (December, 1963)

January 20
ABC *The Haunting* (this issue)/ *The Murder Men* (August, 1963)
RANK *West Side Story* (April, 1962)
INDEPENDENT *From Russia With Love* (re-release, December, 1963)

January 27
ABC *Kiss of the Vampire* (this issue)/*Paranoiac*
RANK *Take Her, She's Mine* (January, 1964)

February 3
ABC *Who's Minding the Store?* (this issue)/*Who's Been Sleeping in My Bed?*
RANK *The Pink Panther* (this issue)

February 10
ABC *The Servant* (December, 1963)
RANK *Ladies Who Do* (this issue)/ *It's All Over Town*
INDEPENDENT *The Terror*

February 24
ABC *Four for Texas* (this issue)
RANK *McLintock* (this issue)

March 9
ABC *The Leather Boys* (January, 1964)

March 16
ABC *Mary, Mary*

March 23
ABC *The Prize*

March 30
ABC *Zulu* (this issue)

westend premieres

All the Way Home: adaptation of the stage play directed by Alex Segal. With Jean Simmons and Robert Preston. February.

Becket: directed from Anouilh play, by Peter Glenville. With Richard Burton as Becket and Peter O'Toole as Henry II. Co-stars Donald Wolfit. Plaza, March 25.

Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb: Stanley Kubrick's 'nightmare comedy' about wing of nuclear bombers launched against Russia by an insane commander. With Peter Sellers, George C Scott and Stirling Hayden. Columbia, January 29.

Irma la Douce: two and a half hour adaptation (without songs) of stage musical, with Shirley MacLaine and Jack Lemmon. Directed by Billy Wilder. Carlton, February 13.

Ladies Who Do: a group of charladies get in on the property racket: with Peggy Mount. Directed by Douglas Hickox. Odeon, Marble Arch, January 16.

The Leather Boys: directed by Sidney Furie. With Rita Tushingham, Colin Campbell and Dudley Sutton. Empire, January 23.

McLintock: robust western directed by Andrew McLaglen, with John Wayne, Patrick Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, Chill Wills and Jack Kruschen. Produced by Michael Wayne. Leicester-square Theatre, January 23.

The Prize: comedy-suspense thriller revolving around the Nobel prize, directed by Mark Robson. With Paul Newman, Edward G Robinson, Elke Sommer, Diane Baker and Micheline Presle. Empire, February 13.

Zulu: based on the British stand against the Zulus at Rorke's Drift in the South African war, with Stanley Baker and Jack Hawkins. Directed by Cy Endfield, who co-produced the film with Stanley Baker. Plaza, January 22.

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DR STRANGELOVE or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb

Guest critic BRYAN FORBES *reviews the war we missed . . .*

Directed and produced by Stanley Kubrick. Screenplay by Kubrick, Terry Southern and Peter George based on the novel *Red Alert* by Peter George. Director of photography, Gilbert Taylor. Editor, Anthony Harvey. Music, Laurie Johnson. Art director, Ken Adam. A Stanley Kubrick production, distributed by Columbia, through BLC. British. Cert. A. 94 mins.

Group Capt Mandrake/President Muffley/Dr Strangelove, PETER SELLERS ; *General 'Buck' Turgidson,* GEORGE C SCOTT ; *General Jack D Ripper,* STERLING HAYDEN ; *Colonel 'Bat' Guano,* KEENAN WYNN ; *Major Kong,* SLIM PICKENS ; *Ambassador de Sadesky,* PETER BULL ; *Miss Scott,* TRACY REED ; *Lt Lothar Zogg (Bombardier),* JAMES EARL JONES ; *Staines,* JACK CRELEY ; *Lt Dietrich,* FRANK BERRY ; *Lt Kivel (navigator),* GLENN BECK ; *Capt 'Ace' Owens,* SHANE RIMMER ; *Lt Goldberg (radio operator),* PAUL TAMARIN ; *General Faceman,* GORDON TANNER ; *Admiral Randolph,* ROBERT O'NEIL ; *Frank,* ROY STEPHENS ; and *Members of Defence Team,* LAURENCE HERDER ; JOHN McCARTHY and HAL GALILI.

The full time film critic must always keep a leery eye on the state of his currency ; too many hastily pronounced masterpieces and he risks inflation. Fortunately, writing in isolation, I have no such worries and can throw my entire bankroll in Stanley Kubrick's direction—if the gesture cleans me out so much the better. I always play *en plein* at roulette : the even money chances are for the so-called experts.

So let's start with and then proceed from the statement that I consider *Dr Strangelove* to be a tragic-comic masterpiece—the first truly moral film of our time : courageous, outrageous, borrowing nothing, admitting of no compromise, very naked and very unashamed : a shattering, womb-trembler of a film.

Perhaps it is difficult, if not well nigh impossible, for the majority of non-Americans, unfamiliar with the holy writ of Americanism, to appreciate what Kubrick has dared to accomplish. It would be too easy to lucky-dip into the box of stock labels and pull out the one marked Sick Humour. It would be dishonest and an insult to Kubrick to suggest that here was merely an opportunist film-maker climbing on the CND bandwagon. It would be a tragedy if his serious joke was not taken seriously.

What has he accomplished then ? What sets *Strangelove* (the very title is sword-edged) in a category apart ? Very simply, it is this. He has taken The Bomb and used it as a banana skin, with a nuclear prat fall as the ultimate pay-off gag. Not funny ? Well, then, try the plot for a laugh. A United States General in absolute command of a nuclear strike force, goes mad, seals off his base and issues an order to his already airborn bombers to proceed past their failsafe points and drop their bombs on pre-determined targets within Soviet Russia. Are you hysterical ? What does it remind you of—*Candid Camera, Compact,* or *Beat The Clock ?* Well, remark the list of characters, all good comedy types—The President of the United States, the Russian Premier, the Russian Ambassador to the USA, the entire American War Cabinet, and Doctor Strangelove himself, a nuclear scientist. They don't suggest Laurel and Hardy to you ? Your imagination doesn't extend that far ? Or is it you just don't believe it ?

Kubrick's genius (and there goes my critical life savings) is that he never attempts to suspend belief. At his most tragic he is at his most comic, displaying a degree of daring that takes one's breath away. Because of his skill (and possibly he is the most accomplished technician working in pure celluloid today) he is able to tread the razor's edge between laughter and horror from the first frame to the last, and his command of his medium is something to marvel at. He has always believed in the personal statement, and this is his most intensely *personal* film : not only is it signed with one signature, but also, watching it, you believe it is aimed at you alone.

Nothing in his past work has prepared us for *Strangelove* (although his *Paths of Glory,* a much under-estimated and grossly neglected film, ahead, alas, of its time, gave hints). So many critics deplore the fact that contemporary British and American directors refuse to be *committed ;* well, they've got a bellyfull of commitment to digest here. He has photographed insanity in sane surroundings, he has shown the inmates running the asylum in cold, pure black and white with no trimmings, and he has done all this without once straying into the realms of fantasy. He realises that there is no fantasy today than can compete with our realities. In our world of double-think, where, with the aid of the right public relations man, the smoking of marijuana can be made socially acceptable on the grounds that it does not induce lung cancer, we deserve what we get. There is no need, in Kubrick's view, to exaggerate ; nor is he merely the bright cynic—he has too much taste for that ; he just sets up his cameras and lets them record the very latest—and maybe the last—chapter in the human comedy.

His technique, although consistently dazzling, is never obvious, and the film is beautifully photographed (Gil Taylor) and beautifully edited (Tony Harvey). There is a combat sequence (GI Joe fighting GI Joe) which compares with the late Bob Capa's monumental coverage of the Spanish Civil War. The footage shot inside the nuclear bomber in flight has the ghastly urgency and reality of the television camera at the scene of a disaster. The dwarfing magnificence of the 'War Room' replica is never abused : once he has introduced it, Kubrick resists all obvious temptations and uses his wide-angle sparingly, shooting for the most part with a telephoto lens for his savage, searching close-ups. Throughout the film his cross-cutting is assured and the sequence of the actual fusing of the nuclear bombs is more exciting and more horrific than the collected works of Edgar Allan Poe. This is a great director's film and should be closely studied, not only by students of the human race, but by graduates of the cinema.

As in all his films Kubrick brings out the best in his actors. Sterling Hayden, George C Scott, Keenan Wynn and Slim Pickens all make magnificent contributions, but the major collective acting triumph belongs to Peter Sellers. He plays three rôles—the President of the USA, an RAF Group Captain and Dr Strangelove himself. One should not make the mistake of judging his achievement merely in terms of three different disguises (although let us give due credit to Stuart Freeborn, a make-up artist almost without parallel). When Sellers is on top form he defies comparison, and here he gives us a trio of characterisations, any one of which would be beyond his nearest rival. He plays one long scene (as the Group Captain) with Sterling Hayden with such controlled comedy genius that Danny Kaye's earlier efforts in the same disguise seem, in retrospect, like amateur night in Butlins. Likewise he avoids all the pitfalls inherent in the rôle of the President. But it is his staggering virtuoso performance as Strangelove in the closing sequence of the film that raises him a mushroom-cloud-high above his contemporaries.

I have no doubt that when Dr Strangelove is exhibited in the United States, the John Birch Society, Mr Barry Goldwater and other far flung outposts of liberal thought will attempt to burn the cinemas. This would be an encouraging sign that Kubrick's message has really gone home. Likewise I hope that the riot squads are out in Red Square if somehow they manage to smuggle a print into Russia. And if I was handling the distribution of this film I would have put up a screen in Trafalgar Square and shown it free on Christmas Eve, and then gone home and got down on my knees.

DAVID AND LISA

Gordon Gow sees young misfits win the first battle . . .

Directed by Frank Perry. Produced by Paul M Heller. Screenplay by Eleanor Perry, based on the book *Lisa and David* by Theodore I Rubin. Director of photography, Leonard Hirschfield. Editor, Irving Oshman. Music Mark Lawrence. Art director, Paul M Heller. Distributed by British Lion. American. Cert. X. 94 mins.

David, KEIR DULLEA; *Lisa,* JANET MARGOLIN; *Dr Alan Swinford,* HOWARD DA SILVA; *Mrs Clemens,* NEVA PATTERSON;; *Mr Clemens,* RICHARD McMURRAY; *John,* CLIFTON JAMES; *Maureen,* NANCY NUTTER; *Simon,* MATTHEW ANDEN; *Kate,* CONI HUDAK; *Carlos,* JAIME SANCHEZ; *Sandra,* JANET LEE PARKER; and *Josette,* KAREN GORNEY.

American films made outside the regular channels are more likely to receive proper recognition now than they were in the days of *Lovers and Lollipops,* which eluded most critical attention in Britain despite the fact that it achieved, somehow or other, an extensive release as second feature to a *Doctor* comedy. *David and Lisa* calls it to mind, dealing as it does with people learning to know one another, and contrasting as it does with the majority of American offbeat movies, which are inclined to be on the tough side and partial to the knowing laugh. Nobody is readier than I am to revel in the jokes of *Pull My Daisy* and *Hallelujah the Hills,* but there is any amount of room as well for the warmth of a film like *David and Lisa,* which is not afraid to make a joke in the trickiest circumstances, but is primarily concerned with arousing thoughts and emotions that are usually hidden beneath a protective cloak of sophistication. What's more, it goes about this delicate operation in a very accomplished way.

The two central characters are adolescents. The boy (Keir Dullea) is highly intelligent but obsessed by two major fears: a fear of time, which goes on inexorably, and a fear of physical contact with other humans, which in his estimation can bring death quicker than the clock. The girl (Janet Margolin) is a schizophrenic who will only express herself by writing down simple words, or else by uttering childish rhymes. Under the sensible but far from all-powerful jurisdiction of a sad, tired doctor (Howard da Silva) in an institution for the mentally ill, these two are drawn together and discover, by difficult degrees, a mutual trust. As time goes on, Lisa can speak to David without rhyming, and David can bring himself to take Lisa by the hand.

This contact between two individuals is what the film is basically about, and the conclusion is happy in the sense that each has helped the other. In the pat, conventional sense, it is no conclusion: no big mystery has been solved, and indeed the reasons behind the obsessions of David and Lisa have been only partly expounded. But sympathy and understanding and tolerance have been invoked, importantly, through sensitive acting from all concerned, especially the two principals, and through the uncannily expert direction of a man new to cinema, Frank Perry. He made the film in Philadelphia, from a script by his wife, Eleanor Perry, based on a case history by a psychiatrist, Dr Theodore Isaac Rubin, which would probably account for the underlying sense of truth that sets these proceedings well apart from run-of-the-psychiatric-ward films.

Developing in short incidents, separated by a good many well-judged but unemphatic fadeouts, the storyline follows no established, machine-tooled routine. Without falling into the pitfall of explaining too much, it encompasses a short, sharp episode between David and his parents, when he has run away from what seems to him a hopeless quest for sanity, and has gone back home to find rapport in that quarter more elusive than ever. When he returns of his own free will to the institution, and begins to talk quietly and openly to the doctor for the first time, direction and acting and writing fuse into one of those rare little scene, that earn a special place in the mind and seem likely to retain it.

The methods employed at the institution have been indicated just sufficiently to provide a credible background, without the blight of documentary rectitude. And some incidental touches have been brought in cleverly, like the controlled humour of a short scene on the porch of the institution on visiting day, when an oversexed adolescent gives David's mother the eye, and a trenchant little episode at a railway station which catches to perfection the fear-prompted aggression of the 'normal' toward the mentally disturbed.

Amid the profusion of eloquent pictures, designed to arouse the right emotional response, and superbly well edited, I should single out a museum scene where Lisa curls herself up against the breast of a mother-image statue, and the treeside lyricism of the moment when Lisa's face is transformed as David describes her, in the kind of language she demands, as 'a pearl of a girl'. Only the clock-nightmares fall short (and then not very far short) of the intelligent technique that blends so beautifully with the emotional strength of this singular film.

It is possible, of course, that *David and Lisa* will run into two kinds of opposition. The first would be escape-valve laughter in the wrong places, which might, with luck, be counteracted by the railway station episode. The other would be reproach for not doing more than it sets out to do, or for not setting out to do more in the first place. But while the mystery-thriller approach to psychiatry is acceptable within reason in mystery-thrillers, in more serious works it can look ridiculously over-simplified. *David and Lisa* contains subtle complexities that cannot in all honesty be explained away comfortably at climax-time. The hope that emerges might seem fairly simple in itself, but it is not easily discovered by the two most vitally concerned. When David asks Lisa to take his hand, the music may surge and the film may fade on a heartening image. But for David and Lisa themselves this isn't the end; just the hard-won beginning. We mustn't kid ourselves that the going will be easy.

THE HAUNTING

Raymond Durgnat meets the spirits of Hill House . . .

Directed and produced by Robert Wise. Screenplay by Nelson Gidding from the novel *The Haunting of Hill House* by Shirley Jackson. Director of photography, David Boulton. Editor, Ernest Walter. Music, Humphrey Searle. Art director, Elliot Scott. An Argyle Enterprises production, distributed by MGM. American. Panavision Cert X. 112 mins.

Eleanor, JULIE HARRIS; *Theo,* CLAIRE BLOOM; *Dr Markway,* RICHARD JOHNSON; *Luke Sanderson,* RUSS TAMBLYN; *Mrs Sanderson,* FAY COMPTON; *Mrs Dudley,* ROSALIE CRUTCHLEY; *Grace Markway,* LOIS MAXWELL; *Mr Dudley,* VALENTINE DYALL; and *Carrie Fredericks,* DIANE CLARE.

A young scientist (Richard Johnson) investigates haunted Hill House, with three assistants, a cheerful young sceptic (Russ Tamblyn), a smart young 'sensitive' (Claire Bloom), and a neurotic young spinster (Julie Harris) who has already been the centre of paranormal attention. Her guilts and loneliness seem to arouse something in the house.

'Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter,' Keats observed; *The Haunting* joins *The Queen of Spades* and *The Innocents* in the tiny group of films based on the principle that seen Things may be scarey but Things unseen are scarier. Here are no ugly monsters, clutching hands, or mouldering corpses;

only nocturnal mumblings, knockings, screams of evil rage and the sensations of intense cold notoriously associated with the supernatural. On some points Wise hints at a possible 'rational' explanation —are the hauntings some sort of plot? Is Claire Bloom telepathically reading her companions' thoughts or is she just wordly wise? But Wise doesn't cheat: the most spectacular things are inexplicable. The storyline's elaborate patterns of Oedipus complexes, mother-daughter hatreds and sibling rivalries don't explain anything away, serving simply to dovetail the two worlds. Richard Johnson and Russ Tamblyn are cast in rather negative rôles, and the film's weight falls on the two women, nice contrasts in neurosis: Claire Bloom's slick El Greco face, rigged out with a dinky leather skull cap and a monster necktie (though her Mary Quant wardrobe is otherwise under par), is nearly as scarey as she was in *80,000 Suspects*. Julie Harris plays sensitively as the mousey spinster, desparately trying to break the web woven by a lifetime's sacrifices.

Here too are the traditional elements of the ghost story: the Victorian house, the smirking statuary, the blown curtains, the eerily thrumming Aeolian harp: 'This'll cure me of Victoriana!' muttered a colleague.

The film's long prologue, racing through the highspots of the mansion's horrid history, is fluidly conceived and has some breakneck cutting which will fascinate all students of montage. And in between shocks we are treated to the Professor's little lecturettes about poltergeists, telekinesis, all supposed to give the story the scientific prestige of J B Rhine's *The Reach of the Mind*.

In every way Wise seems to have insured himself against audience scepticism; and perhaps that's the trouble. Wise doesn't, himself, believe in ghosts, he's far more frightened of his audience. Corman apart, few film directors seem to realise that it's not intellectual belief which causes fear, but fear which compels belief. We're don't have to be blinded with science, we're dying to be scared, just cut the cackle and come to the spooks. All these explanations *break* the spell. Instead, the film seemed to need some sort of subplot, to explore the human relationships a little more. After two very impressive hauntings, the story settles for two disappointingly 'material' climaxes, depending on the ricketiness of an old iron staircase, and a car crash.

Somehow the story ends *both* before we have got to know these strange characters in depth *and* before the supernatural has been explored. Just when the heroine is being 'taken over' by the Spirit of the House, Wise retreats to a very objective, exterior view of her suffering. Surely he should have plunged us into her mind as it begins to take possession of her, of *us*. This is the real climax, the merging of the psychological and supernatural themes, and he flunks it.

Earlier on, there is a disturbing little scene where the scientist and the women find themselves in a stuffily Victorian 'Purple Parlour'; the Professor curiously miscalls it the 'Operating Theatre' and Claire Bloom remarks that all it needs is a whipping-post. These three 'views' of the room set up an edgier, eerier atmosphere than all the psycho-analytical explanations, which, like the scientific ones, induce scepticism rather than atmosphere.

The prologue's very slickness defeats it; it moves too quickly to be as appalling as it should (and has too crudely written a commentary). The snickering and twittering music of Humphrey Searle is a bit too dandyish and neat and seemed quite near tongue-in-cheek at times.

For all this, the film can be recommended as intelligently and enjoyably shivery entertainment; the actual hauntings aren't beneath comparison with the climaxes of Corman's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Its ending has a certain bitterness; the spirits in this evil old house were the only things in the world which passionately wanted the heroine. Here is the solitude theme from *Two for the Seesaw*.

THE CARDINAL

Allen Eyles becomes a Preminger convert . . .

Directed and produced by Otto Preminger. Screenplay by Robert Dozier from the novel by Henry Morton Robinson. Director of photography, Leon Shamroy. Editor, Louis R Loeffler. Music, Jerome Moross. Art director, Lyle Wheeler. Distributed by Columbia through BL-C. American. Panavision. Technicolor. Cert A. 174 mins.

Stephen Fermoyle, TOM TRYON; *Anne-Marie Ledebur*, ROMY SCHNEIDER; *Mona* and *Regina*, CAROL LYNLEY; *Archbishop Glennon*, JOHN HUSTON; *Cardinal Quarenghi*, RAF VALLONE; *Benny*, JOHN SAXON; *Lalage Menton*, JILL HAWORTH; *Mrs Fermoyle*, DOROTHY GISH; *Father Halley*, BURGESS MEREDITH; *Florrie*, MAGGIE McNAMARA; *Father Gillis*, OSSIE DAVIS; *Monsignor Monaghan*, CECIL KELLAWAY; *Cardinal Innitzer*, JOSEF MEINRAD; *Mr. Fermoyle*, CAMERON PRUD'HOMME; *Spanish dancer*, JOSE DUVAL; *Father Gaccobbi*, TULLIO CARMINATI; and *Frank*, BILL HAYES.

As a producer, Otto Preminger can't be accused of playing it safe. A bare six years after his stunning flop with *St Joan*, he offers us three hours with *The Cardinal*, or the story in flashback of how one Stephen Fermoyle (Tom Tryon) has lived the life of other people's expectations, casting off his own heavy doubts to rise between the two wars from priest to the high ecclesiastical post of the title. If only word-of-mouth does its job the publicists will have little to fear, for *The Cardinal* strikes me as grand entertainment and one of the more easily digested and satisfying mammoth films of recent years. If it isn't really memorable, it's because this sense of satisfaction tends to fade rather quickly, the film making no real claim on the intelligence and emotions.

Its plot is custom-built to accommodate the popular issues of controversy in Roman Catholicism, but not to resolve them in any forthright fashion or argue them with any great subtlety (although the internal manoeuvrings of the Church are presented in unabashed detail). Thus, for instance, after an apparent miracle has been rationally explained, it is mystically recharged ('Facts are only small parts of a much larger truth, God is the first cause of everything') and one chooses one's point of view.

The first problem arises within the young priest's family; his sister Mona (Carol Lynley) is in love with a Jew (John Saxon) who is persuaded to change his beliefs until some arrogant Catholics press him too far. The abandoned Mona disgustedly kicks over the traces and Fermoyle later has to refuse the abortion necessary to save her life, being unable to betray his faith. Haunted by this decision, he decides to leave the Church but is persuaded by his superior to take a year's absence to think it over (this is diplomatically disguised so as not to damage his future). He falls in love with a Viennese student (Romy Schneider) but eventually returns. The issue of the Church's relationship to politics emerges with his intervention in the racial squabbles of the Deep South and on his mission to Austria where a Cardinal's collaborationist tendencies are aiding the Anschluss.

Part of the film's method is to curtail its climaxes so that everything is merged into the whole. Even so, one detects a certain slackening later on, perhaps because the rise-of-Hitler scenes are more familiar than the earlier ones with their ambitious and very capable period reconstruction. The suicide that Fermoyle rather conveniently witnesses is melodramatic, and the crosscutting between a fascist mob and the devout crowd who have heard the Austrian Cardinal's revised opinions seem crude (and, rare for the aloof Preminger, designed to whip up an emotional response). Also, Leon Shamroy's otherwise excellent photography could have been rather more stark in the latter sequences.

The question remains as to whether the accumulative impact justifies so smooth an ordering of the film's progress, and the answer is mostly in Preminger's favour, even if this de-emphasising does

make the film seem a little evasive and rather superficial. After Mona's death, for instance, we're quickly taken forward several years to one of her child's birthday parties and then as quickly off on the somewhat comic voyage to Rome, leaving us scant time to feel the situation. Even in the episode of Father Halley (Burgess Meredith), his death is anticipated which spreads an impact that is in any case slight through Preminger's sober handling and a quick move to other things.

Often the dialogue adds a trenchancy that justifies a concise treatment of a scene: the surgeon's method of saving Mona's life is described in one vivid sentence, and his remark at some hesitation—'I take it this is some kind of ridiculous scruple'—acidly etches his viewpoint, just as the short discussion on the porch by the Southern troublemakers effectively illuminates their mental processes and the local Monsignor, reminded that all men are brothers, can cement duty and prejudice by referring to Fermoyle as 'My Yankee brother.' And words are most effectively circumvented by the way in which Fermoyle and the girl are cut off by the glass window through which she sees him back in clerical garb.

Thus *The Cardinal* is far from dull and largely makes up for what I see as a rather limiting and popularised treatment. It has uniformly good performances, Tom Tryon sturdily justifying Preminger's faith in him. One other actor must be singled out: John Huston, given the most flamboyant rôle in the film (as the vain, cigar-puffing Archbishop of Boston) memorably throws his craggy charm behind the part, making one hope it's not the last to be seen of him on this side of the camera.

McLINTOCK

John Cutts joins the family frolics . . .

Directed by Andrew V McLaglen. Produced by Michael Wayne. Original screenplay by James Edward Grant. Director of photography, William H Clothier. Editor, Otho Lovering. Music, Frank De Vol. A Batjac production, distributed by United Artists. American. Panavision. Technicolor. Cert U. 126 mins.

McLintock, JOHN WAYNE; *Katherine McLintock,* MAUREEN O'HARA; *Louise Warren,* YVONNE DE CARLO; *Devlin Warren,* PATRICK WAYNE; *Becky McLintock,* STEFANIE POWERS; *Birnbaum,* JACK KRUSCHEN; *Drago,* CHILL WILLS; *Matt Douglas Jnr.* JERRY VAN DYKE; *Bunny Dull,* EDGARE BUCHANAN; *Ben Sage,* BRUCE CABOT; *Davey Elk,* PERRY LOPEZ; *Puma,* MICHAEL PATE; *Agard,* STROTHER MARTIN; *Matt Douglas,* GORDON JONES; and *Governor,* ROBERT LOWERY.

Part satirical Western and part slapstick comedy—a mixture of wild brawls and open sentiment, *McLintock* is nothing if not a family affair. John Wayne stars; his son, Michael Wayne, produces; another son, Patrick Wayne, co-stars; a daughter, Alissa Wayne, appears; the son of an old friend, Andrew McLaglen—whose father was the late Victor McLaglen, directs; a bevy of almost permanently employed Wayne technical talents — the cameraman, the scriptwriter, the makeup man—assist; and a handful of long-time Wayne performing friends — Maureen O'Hara, Bruce Cabot, Chill Wills and Hank Worden among them—aid and abet.

It's 12-reel husband and wife clash apart, there's no firm plot to speak of (actually, there's material enough for a dozen plots: but if the producers haven't worried about them, why should you?), but its action ambles along at an easy lope, the colour photography's gorgeous, and every now and then the script pops up with a line that has a vintage ring to it ('You just keep a civil tongue in your unprepossessing face' Miss O'Hara snaps at a startled rustic at one point). In fact, it's altogether the type of film one imagines must have been great fun to have worked on.

Yet high spirits apart, the piece doesn't amount to much. Instead of wooing our attention, it tends to assume that it has already been won; tends to think that it need only be casual in approach to be acceptable. It's as though the whole thing was done on a day-to-day improvisation basis, with no thought to overall effect. There's one good wham-bang fight at the beginning (staged on the edge of a clay pit with every member of the cast being knocked into it), but after this, nothing. The mood's all fits and starts. In an undemanding vein, it's not unamusing. But somehow I was left with the impression that it needed no laughter other than its own; that all its fun and merriment had taken place on the *other* side of the camera.

PALM SPRINGS WEEKEND

Robin Bean witnesses the fall of Troy . . .

Directed by Norman Taurog. Produced by Michael A Hoey. Screenplay by Earl Hammer Jr. Director of photography, Harold Lipstein. Editor, Folmer Blangsted. Music, Frank Perkins. Art director, George James Hopkins. A Warner Bros. production, distributed by Warner-Pathe. American. Technicolor. Cert A. 100 mins.

Jim Munroe, TROY DONAHUE; *Gail Lewis,* CONNIE STEVENS; *Stretch Fortune,* TY HARDIN; *Bunny Dixson,* STEFANIE POWERS; *Eric Dean,* ROBERT CONRAD; *Chief Dixon,* ANDREW DUGAN; *Coach Campbell,* JACK WESTON; *Mrs. Yates,* CAROLE COOK; *Biff Roberts,* JERRY VAN DYKE; *Amanda North,* ZEME NORTH; *Boom-Boom,* BILLY MUMY; *Cora Dixon,* DOROTHY GREEN; *Gabby,* ROBERT GOTHIE; *Hap,* GREG BENEDICT; *Mike,* MARK DEMPSEY; *Fred,* GARY KINCAID and *Dave,* JIM SHANE.

An American trade review summed this film up as 'For those who think young'. Those young thinking people are probably the ones at which the film is aimed, but if anyone believes that the behaviour on screen in *Palm Springs Weekend* represents how the 'young' act they must be pretty out of touch.

This has the appearance of a story that has reached you second-hand: watered down, vague, listless, all too familiar. It's another of those Eastertime student invasions of a popular resort, this time in the Californian desert at Palm Springs, where we have the prospect of a college basketball team fraternising with the locals. Their captain, a real old fashioned youth called Jim (played by Troy Donahue who now seems to be vieing with Presley over who can play the most virtuous rôles, and is here directed by the hand that guided Presley through four films, that of Norman Taurog) is going through college on an athletic scholarship, although his ambition is to be a doctor. These college schemes inspire such confidence. (Be interesting to know how many students make a career of the subjects they take their degrees in—many seem to specialise in the one they can pass, with or without ease, regardless of what they intend to do in life).

Anyway, Jim and his pals are out to show us that they are much maligned and that they are decent young gentlemen who want just a little civilised clean fun before settling down to complete respectability. No invading savages these, certainly not justifying police chief's remark that the Red Cross should declare Palm Springs a disaster area. Only rough stuff is provided by local leather clad gang who crash parties and start a fight, and some most diabolically selfish behaviour by spoilt rich youth named Dean who makes a habit or running other people off the road and trying to track down his Dad who is between honeymoons ('Dad's a professional bridegroom'). But he can't be all that bad though, since his passenger's seat is occupied by a life-size Bugs Bunny (unfortunately not animated). In the end after fatherly talk from Jim he breaks down in a sobbing fit. Jim, meantime, picks as his partner the police chief's daughter which presents plenty of opportunities for creating misunderstandings then straightening them out.

To prove that the real delinquents are below 12 and over 35, we have the usual obnoxious young trouble-maker by the name of Boom-Boom who succeeds in

he's been drinking again', following which he comes to graveside, hurls spade through coffin, mighty scream, and on come the credit titles. The actors all take the bizarre in their stride: Clifford Evans fits neatly into the odd rôle of the professor who appears as either blind drunk or with stiff, curt military bearing; Edward De Souza and Jennifer Daniel bring quite a bit of life to the dull honeymooners; while Noel Willman has some glorious moments as Ravna, chief vampire, whether entertaining his guests as the most cultured of hosts, about to sink his fangs into a new victim, or striding into a hall where all his white-robed 'disciples' are seated on the floor and addressing them 'Ladies and gentlemen, may I present a new disciple'.

All credit to Don Sharp for turning what could have been a creaking, monotously predictable story into an exceptionally well-made (with some beautifully framed shots) and entertaining film: apart from a couple of poor process shots the production standard is extraordinarily high, and most remarkable he has handled it with buoyant freshness. One hopes that in the near future Don Sharp will be given a subject far more worthy of his talent: His previous work has more than justified this. Let's hope he will not remain, as Don Siegel has, regarded as just an excellent routine director.

ROBIN BEAN

THE SUITOR

Written and directed by Pierre Etaix. Produced by Paul Claudon. Director of photography, Pierre Levent. Music, Jean Paillaud. Distributed by Connoisseur. French. English subtitles. Original title: *Le Soupirant*. Cert. U. 85 mins.

The Suitor, PIERRE ETAIX; *The Father*, CLAUDE MASSOT; *The Mother*, DENISE PERRONNE; *Ilka*, KARIN VESELY; *Laurence*, LAURENCE LIGNERES; and *Stella*, FRANCE ARNELL.

There's a handy division between two schools of slapstick—the tearaway Mack Sennett tempo, all custard pies and runaway fire-engines, and the slow, meditative Hal Roach approach. W C Fields, Harry Langdon and Laurel and Hardy are the traditional champions of the second style.

It was Jacques Tati, though, who made the '60s a slow-motion epoch. *Jour de Fete* had a high-speed climax, but Tati's personal style was funeral. *Les Vacances de M Hulot* broke the hitherto compulsory 'plot' into a series of episodes. *Mon Oncle* moved all too fashionable—its jokes were pretty thin on the ground, its message taken all too seriously. Perhaps the best slow-motion comedy was Jerry Lewis' *The Ladies' Man*, but Jerry's efforts in this idiom have been very erratic.

Le Soupirant tends to confirm one's fears that if the Hal Roach style is fashionable again, it's for all the wrong reasons. Comedians, responding to the current self-consciousness about 'significance', think a slowish style will enable them to be more soulful and serious about everything. In fact if comedy gets any more serious it'll end by disappearing altogether, which, as things are, it isn't far from doing Even Jerrry, last of the cavemen, has developed a detestable habit of climaxing his films with sanctimonious moral homilies which Laurel and Hardy managed without, thank goodness (what homily could fit *The Music Box* or *Tit for Tat?*).Let's hope the cruel exuberance of *It's A Mad . . . World* inspires a return to irresponsibility.

These reflections are prompted by the award of the Prix Delluc to *Le Soupirant*, which is as boring as it is clever. Etaix's shorts compelled some sort of admiration for the resourcefulness with which they worked out every possible permutation on their basic gags; they were as relentless as if they had been worked out by a committee of time-and-motion-study men who with slide rules and protractors calculated every possible mishap practicable in every given situation.

At its best moments, which are few, *Le Soupirant* catches that cleverness—as when the hero (played by Etaix himself) is fascinated by television during four o'clock tea, or the quite mathematical brilliance of its final gag. But the aim as a whole struck me as dessicated and precious. It's a sequence of gags about a timid absent-minded young student of astronomy who realises he ought to get married and keeps trying either to pick up women whom he can't get or to escape from women whom he doesn't want. The monotony of the human interest is considerable; most of the gags are either flatfooted imitations of de Broca or somewhat superannuated leftovers from René Clair wistfulness. Etaix reminds you of every just about every comic that ever was Buster Keaton in build and seriousness, Harry Langdon and/or Stan Laurel in dumb hopefulness, M Hulot in absence of mind (and fondness for being seen in long-shot)—yet never seems positively present as himself. Almost every joke is telegraphed (little variations providing little emotional surprise), while the restraint in music and dialogue makes everything which falls flat do so in a deathly hush. Etaix may well make a funny feature eventually.

The blonde au pair girl is a sweetie.

RAYMOND DURGNAT

CHARGE OF THE BLACK LANCERS

Directed by Giacomo Gentilomo. Produced by Guilo Giambartolomi. Original screenplay by Ugo Guerra, Luciano Martino and Ottavio Alessi. Director of photography, Raffaele Masiocchi. Music Mario Nascimbera. A Royal Film-France Cinema production, distributed by E. J. Fancey. Italo-French English dialogue. Original title, *I Lancieri Neri*. Cinemascope. Eastmancolor. Year of production 1961. Cert U. 97 mins.

Andre, MEL FERRER; *Iassa*, YVONNE FURNEAUX; *Marcia*, LETICIA ROMAN; and *Serger*, JEAN-PAUL CLAUDIO

You would be hard put to it to name a perfect spectacular, even if you recognised one when you saw it. But if you were asked to choose a representative Italian spectacular which was also a good Italian spectacular, you could do a lot worse than to pick *Charge of the Black Lancers*. Despite its customary three-man team of writers, it only occasionally looks like the end of term school play, and by and large it's well conceived, better directed, and the end product is very satisfying. Such is the prevailing climate of thought that one almost feels apologetic recommending a cheap spectacular, but an evening at *Charge of the Black Lancers* wouldn't be wasted.

The opening is patchy, but the plot is straightforward and settles down quite rapidly to a typical tale of Kiev versus Kirgiz, overlain with a mythological aroma of good brother (Ferrer—who else ?) versus bad brother who defects to the enemy out of grudge and a deep-rooted badness we felt was there from the start.

Provided you aren't too sophisticated or snobbish, there is much to be enjoyed: the sentimental lyrical opening with the lovers on the river bank reminiscing over their childhood is as corny as Lillian Gish, but something one regrets Hollywood no longer does. Gentilomo's sense of composition and colour in the exterior shots is effectively romantic. Some of the intimate scenes, aided by intelligent dubbing, are moving — the characters seem to be ineffectual against the pressure of event, a strength rather than a weakness in this film. (Example: in one scene Ferrer attempts to rescue Furneaux from imprisonment in a dank and very foul dungeon. Shortage of time and the frailness of human capabilities force them both to personal courage and self-sacrifice.)

The film's set piece is the final battle scene, perhaps a shade overlong, but even more accomplished than Gentilomo's battle scene in *The Last of the Vikings* (the best thing in a largely unintelligeable film). Aided by some stirring (if rather repetitive) regal music, the sequence recalls the final scenes of Olivier's *Richard III*.

But it is the film's overall conception which impresses most: the sense of rightness in the balance of scene with scene; the classic progression of inevitability, of action and reaction, to the climax; the blend of mythological and historical. Gentilomo is like a Renaissance artist who paints his scope screen with bold, broad, gutsy stabs of life and colour. He refuses to become decoyed by details, rather reserving his eye for the historical scale of his drama. The final image, in long shot, is of the newly crowned king emerging with his queen after victorious battle. But the personal triumph means nothing, it has become lost within the national triumph: the figures are dwarfed by cheering soldiers, they become hidden by the Kiev flag.

IAN JOHNSON

LADIES WHO DO

Directed by C M Pennington-Richards. Produced by George H Brown. Screenplay by Michael Pertwee from an idea by John Bignell. Director of photography, Geoffrey Faithfull. Editor, Oswald Hafenrichter. Music, Ron Goodwin. Art director, Harry White. A Bryanstone production, distributed by BL-C. British. Cert U. 85 mins.

Mrs Cragg, PEGGY MOUNT ; *Colonel Whitforth*, ROBERT MORLEY ; *James Ryder*, HARRY H CORBETT ; *Mrs Higgins*, MIRIAM KARLIN ; *Emily Parish*, AVRIL ELGAR ; *Mrs Merryweather*, DANDY NICHOLS ; *Mr Tait*, JON PERTWEE ; *Mr Strang*, NIGEL DAVENPORT ; *Foreman*, GRAHAM STARK ; *Inspector*, RON MOODY ; and *Police Driver*, CARDEW ROBINSON.

Under the guidance of a retired army Colonel, four London charladies form a company, Ladezudu Ltd (*i e* Ladies Who Do), to dabble on the Stock Exchange. Raiding the waste-paper baskets of the tycoons for whom they clean, the chars bring their findings back to their board room, where the Colonel sifts through it in search of stock tips. Soon the chars are tycoons themselves and when a property speculator sets up a scheme to demolish the street in which they live, the ladies are able to sabotage his plans.

Like the same producer and director's *Double Bunk* a few years back, *Ladies Who Do* starts with the initial advantage of an eminently workable central notion. Chars turned tycoons, take-over bids foiled through waste-paper basket leaks, the idea literally bubbles with happy possibilities. What a pity, then, that the film never really amounts to anything. Some shrewd casting apart (Peggy Mount, Robert Morley, Harry H Corbett, Dandy Nicholls, Nigel Davenport and Ron Moody), the piece is a witless dribble of cliché and contrivance. A one joke jape involving a great deal of shoving and shouting (there's a music score which underlines the action with the murderous doggedness of a bloodthirsty bloodhound), but little in the way of comic imagination.

JOHN CUTTS

LASSIE'S GREAT ADVENTURE

Directed by William Beaudine. Produced by Robert Golden. Screenplay by Monroe Manning and Charles O'Neal from a story by Summer Long. Director of photography, Ed Fitzgerald. Editor, Monica Cullingwood. A Jack Wrather production, distributed by 20th Century-Fox. American. De Luxe colour. Cert. U. 92 mins.

Lassie, LASSIE; *Mrs Paul Martin*, JUNE LOCKHART; *Paul Martin*, HUGH REILLY; and *Timmy Martin*, JON PROVOST.

In the good old days there was Rin-Tin-Tin, there was Strongheart, there was Flame the Wonder Dog. In our epoch of standardisation and brand-names, all dogs are called Lassie. In the first TV series Lassie's young master had to be man of the house for his maw and granpappy; here she lives with young Timmy and both his parents somewhere in the Middle West. But for me it isn't Lassie unless its mistress is the young girl played by Elizabeth Taylor.

'The story of a little boy and his gallant collie dog is tugging at the heartstrings of a continent, ladies and gentlemen' says a radio commentator, without much conviction. But it never managed the faintest of tweaks at mine, being quite devoid of the gorgeous emotionalising of MGM's original dog-opera. Lassie and Timmy get carried off in a balloon, deposited in the Canadian wilderness, searched for by Mounties, worried over by Mom, attacked by a wild boar and a falcon (what, no rattlesnake?), carried over the rapids, scared by a kindly Indian, and so on and so forth.

There are a couple of practical hints for dog-lovers: how to quench your dog's thirst by straining berries through your handkerchief, and how to let him down from the gondola of a stranded balloon. For all its coloured scenery, the film is television-bound and slow, with flat climaxes, lengthy intermediaries, and expressionless acting. Lassie is constantly gazing offscreen for instructions, and the boy is scarcely better. I know this is only a kids' film; but kids' films should be made by talented artists.

RAYMOND DURGNAT

GUNFIGHT AT COMMANCHE CREEK

Directed by Frank McDonald. Produced by Ben Schwalb. Screenplay by Edward Bernds. Director of photography, Joseph F Biroc. Editor, William Austin. Music, Marlin Skiles. Art director, Edward Jewell. An Allied Artists production, distributed by Warner-Pathe. American. Panavision. Colour. Cert U. 90 mins.

Gifford, AUDIE MURPHY; *Carter*, BEN COOPER; *Abbie*, COLLEEN MILLER; *Troop*, DeFOREST KELLEY; *Nielson*, JAN MERLIN; *Marshal Shearer*, JOHN HUBBARD; *Winton*, DAMIAN O'FLYNN; and *Janie*, SUSAN SEAFORTH.

A wise screenwriter will not tamper too far with the time-proven charm of the western. A quick death in the dust, the sweating flank of a horse, a crude but recognisable code of honour, broad sun-drenched landscapes where a man may live by his own wit and muscle untroubled by twentieth-century woes. Western fans will tell you that these, and others, are the poetry of the medium.

Make your western too scientific, too cut and dried, and it isn't a good western, its rich colours become diluted, faded and patchy. *Gunfight at Comanche Creek* isn't a good western—it proves the rule. A narrator who nags worse than Edgar Lustgarten in his Scotland Yard feature days, a marine-style briefing, telegraphs, heliographs, the National Detective Agency—it simply won't do. At any moment one expects patrol cars and Broderick Crawford to pile in.

It's not that the basic plot idea isn't a good one: a gang releases prisoners from jail, forces them to commit more robberies, and hands them back to the law when the price on their heads is high enough. But too little thought seems to have been given to the screenplay in its early days; it looks, and probably is, a rush job. *Gunfight* is competent enough otherwise, but by the time it reached the set any amount of competence was too late. This western won't waft you to cloud-cuckoo land, at times you might even find it mildly irritating. It commits the one unforgivable sin: it never lets you forget it's just—a film. IAN JOHNSON

DR SYN

Directed by James Neilson. Produced by Walt Disney. Co-producer, Bill Anderson. Screenplay by Robert Westerby based on *Christopher Syn* by Russell Thorndike and William Buchanan. Director of photography, Paul Beeson. Editor, Peter Boita. Music, Gerard Schurmann. Art director, Michael Stringer. Walt Disney. American. Technicolor. Cert. U. 98 mins.

Dr Syn/The Scarecrow, PATRICK McGOOHAN; *Sexton Mipps/ Hellspite*, GEORGE COLE; *Simon Bates*, TONY BRITTON; *Sir Thomas Banks*, MICHAEL HORDERN; *General Pugh*, GEOFFREY KEEN; *Mrs Waggett*, KAY WALSH; *King George III*, ERIC POHLMANN; *Joe Ransley*, PATRICK WYMARK; *Prosecutor Fragg*, ALAN DOBIE; *John Banks/ The Curlew*, SEAN SCULLY; *Philip Brackenbury*, ERIC FLYNN; *Harry Banks*, DAVID BUCK; *Head Jailer*, PERCY HERBERT; *Sam Farley*, ROBERT BROWN; *Kate Banks*, JILL CURZON; *The Bishop*, MARK DIGNAM; *Ben*, GORDON GOSTELOW; *Beadle*, BRUCE SETON; *2nd Jailer*, ALLAN McCLELLAND; *George Ransley*, RICHARD O'SULLIVAN; *Dragoon Corporal*, SIMON LACK; and *Mrs Ransley*, ELSIE WAGSTAFF.

The nightly activities of the Vicar of Dymchurch take on a more moral guise under the Disney banner, than in the recent Hammer version of the tale. The attraction of having the local vicar, the height of respectability in public, in a scarecrow disguise leading a band of smugglers in 18th-century Kent is certainly appealing, but its not a particularly easy story to put on screen in any but an 'orthodox' way: and really all of Disney's historical stories have appeared in roughly the same mould (and here again we have Eric Pohlmann giving the stock characterisation of George III). Romney Marsh, looking anything but a marsh here, probably was a much more vital retreat than shown in *Dr Syn*, while the film dutifully goes into the excessive taxation laws, military corruption, bribery and rampant press gangs yet fails to come much closer to the atmosphere of the time than a game of toy soldiers. The fact that it is also intended as three one-hour shows for American television may have been a limiting factor.

But on a certain level its quite enjoyable: and within the limitations it remains primarily an actor's film, with a rich array of experienced British actors (quite a showcase for British theatre), Patrick

terrorizing his baby sitters till he is landed with one that is an exponent of judo who he really takes to : ' Come down and I'll show you my train '. ' Are you sure you're only nine years old ?'. Also we have the amorous coach who between making vitamin concoctions for his team is making passes at Boom-Boom's mother, quite a boob-boob, who leaves him with a parting invitation to ' Come back in the slow season, and I'll give you special rates '. Oh, boy.

For additional attractions we have the routine of havoc when detergent is emptied into the swimming pool ; a double switching of glasses containing sedatives, and Ty Hardin and Jerry van Dyke singing *Bye Bye Blackbird* by the pool. Technically, it reflects little credit on director and editor, some bad cuts and confusing continuity; and a particularly bad exterior set outside a casino where a long scene takes place against familiar rock and backdrop between Donahue and Stefanie Powers magnified by two tracking shots which pull back to reveal a black void above the backcloth.

And, great event, Troy Donahue even sings—over the credits—something inaptly titled *Live Young*. It's a long time since they did.

ZULU

Directed by Cy Endfield. Produced by Stanley Baker and Cy Endfield. Screenplay by John Prebble and Cy Endfield from an original story by John Prebble. Director of photography, Stephen Dale. Editor, John Jympson. Music, John Barry. Art director, Ernest Archer. A Diamond Films production, distributed by Paramount. British. Technirama. Technicolor. Cert. U. 135 mins.

Lieut John Chard, R.E., STANLEY BAKER; *Rev Otto Witt*, JACK HAWKINS; *Margareta Witt*, ULLA JACOBBSON; *Pvt Henry Hook*, JAMES BOOTH; *Lieut Bromhead*, MICHAEL CAINE; *Colour-Sergeant Bourne*, NIGEL GREEN; *Pvt Owen*, IVOR EMMANUEL; *Sgt Maxfield*, PAUL DANEMAN; *Cpl Allen*, GLYNN EDWARDS; *Pvt Thomas*, NEIL McCARTHY; *Pvt Hitch*, DAVID KERNAN *Pvt Cole*, GARRY BOND; *Pvt 612 Williams*, PETER GILL; *Lance-Corporal*, TOM GERRARD; and *Surgeon Reynolds*, PATRICK MAGEE.

Cutting through the spectacle-belt with a salutary bloodymindedness, Cy Endfield's *Zulu* takes an anti-heroic view of the kind of situation which used to be treated to flag-waving fervour. The year is 1897, and a small bunch of red-jacketed whites is holding a mealie-bag bastion against encroaching hordes of spear-brandishing Africans. No time is wasted on background information : the situation in itself is enough for the purpose. Economy is observed in the spare dialogue, in the merciful minimising of comic capers among the ' common ' soldiery, and in the suspense which precedes each Zulu attack. Here is a spectacle that is no longer than it needs to be, an adventure story pervaded by an implicit sourness. Duty-bound and dubious, the British soldiers who stay at their post, when they could in reasonable conscience clear out and save their skins, are never glorified. Uniforms are dapper and strategy is shrewd, but there is fear and sorrow in every soldier's eye, and at length their collective attitude is summed up by a young lieutenant, new to combat, who surveys the blood-smeared vista of victory and declares himself ' sick and ashamed '.

It could be argued, of course, that in the process of deploring bloodshed *Zulu* shows a good deal of it. Cy Endfield is strong on the tough stuff, which extends from boil-lancing, through innumerable and often quite persuasive killings, to the sight of a surgeon groping with bloodied hands at a dying man's chest. None of this seemed to me excessive in view of the overall attitude, which manifests itself in every direction, cutting down clichés to size and even endowing the traditional figure of a ramrod colour-sergeant with a basic humanity that seeps sadly through his aura of discipline (a performance by Nigel Green that makes all previous portrayals of the type look false).

At the same time, and without being two-faced about it, *Zulu* possesses what many a well-meant movie lacks : perspective. It is never so bigoted as to assume that the situation is simple ; courage in itself is noted and acknowledged, but not with a crow of triumph : when Richard Burton speaks the names of the men who were awarded Victoria Crosses for their service in this action, he does so in tones more redolent of a lament.

Filmically, Endfield would appear to have enjoyed himself quite a bit. Addicted to the panning shot (which admittedly never pans quite as far as you might expect), he gets in some splendid visuals on his African location, especially when the soldiers stand in a formal pattern awaiting the enemy, and when the dead and dying Africans lie in a heap at the feet of their sad-eyed conquerors. From the mountains and the sky, nature is constantly reproaching the ugly deeds of men ; the first wave of attacking Zulus is presented in a composition that includes, right in the foreground, a tree loaded with blossom.

Diverting details are plentiful, among them a shot of Zulu spears coming through a hospital door, which recalls one of Hitchcock's finer frenzies in *The Birds*, and for extra measure a cattle stampede with the camera underhoof.

On the debit list, small but not to be overlooked, the chief item depicts a ritual Zulu mating dance, agreeable in itself but beside the point. It might well have been packaged separately and disposed of elsewhere — perchance in an edition of the Coal Mining Review when material is running thin. Equally awkward, whether historically accurate or not, is the intrusion of corn that occurs when approaching Zulus frighten their enemy with song, and the whites, who are Welsh, respond with a rousing impromptu chorus of ' Men of Harlach '.

As befits the emphasis required by succinct scripting, all the acting is nearer to naturalism than to realism, and the cast is wholly capable. I have mentioned Green, who has done character acting in the British cinema a notable service ; it is good to see Jack Hawkins cast, to his credit, as a missionary who has the right idea but also, in the face of overwhelming soldierly opposition, a penchant for the bottle ; Michael Caine is intelligent and properly flexible in the difficult part of the young lieutenant ; James Booth better than he has ever been on the screen as a ' common ' soldier drawn, for once, in depth ; and as the superior officer, Stanley Baker, who has also co-produced with Endfield, is sincere and remarkably self-effacing, and needs only to be informed that on occasions like this the omission of a reasonable haircut is carrying authenticity to extremes. Also on hand, as the girl-most-likely-to-get-her-blouse-ripped, is Ulla Jacobsson, doing very nicely.

As comment and as cinema, *Zulu* earns my moderately qualified commendation.

GORDON GOW

THE PINK PANTHER

Directed by Blake Edwards. Produced by Martin Jurow. Screenplay by Maurice Richlin and Blake Edwards. Director of photography, Philip Lathrop. Editor, Ralph E Winters. Music, Henry Mancini. Art director, Fernando Carrere. A Mirisch production, distributed by United Artists. Ameican. Technirama. Technicolor. Cert. A. 114 mins.

Sir Charles, DAVID NIVEN; *Inspector Jacques Clouseau*, PETER SELLERS; *George*, ROBERT WAGNER; *Simone Clouseau*, CAPUCINE; *Princess Dala*, CLAUDIA CARDINALE; *Angela Dunning*, BRENDA DE BANZIE; *Greek ' Cousin '*, FRAN JEFFRIIES; *Tucker*, COLIN GORDON; *Defence Attorney*, JOHN LE MESURIER; *Saloud*, JAMES LANPHIER; *Artoff*, GUY THOMAJAN; and *The Novelist*, MICHAEL TRUBSHAW.

Sw'elegant is the word for *The Pink Panther*. Of course, you won't find it in any dictionary: but then dictionaries are given to precise descriptions, and I would be somewhat reluctant to tie a too definite label on this new film of Blake Edwards'. In mundane terms ' comedy-thriller ' could, I suppose, be used (and no doubt will be), but I prefer sw'elegant, for that at least gives a hint of the film's visual lushness as well as its antic content. In fact, if you can imagine the likes of a bejewelled comic-strip — sublimely chaotic knockabout (gadabout, too, come to that) framed in creamy super luxury—then that's about the size of it.

Swish titles herald the thing in (De-Patie-Freleng Enterprises are responsible, and they, along with Henry Mancini's effervescent score, deserve a cheer). From experience one has come to suspect novel credit-titling: for usually the picture that follows is never half as original. But *The Pink Panther* quickly shatters this theory in seconds A shadowy figure is seen twiddling the wall safe of a swank villa; a noise from the street below sends him to a window. Peering out he spots a police car pulling up. Hastening back to the

safe, he twiddles urgently, frees the lock, pockets some glittering loot, and before shinning down an escape-rope thrown from the window, leaves his trade mark, a white monogrammed glove, dangling on the safe's edge. Breaking into the room, the police check the safe, then fly to the window, one of them taking off down the escape-rope after the crook. Landing in the street, the crook jump into a waiting car and roars off. Stepping from a doorway, an accomplice strikes a match and lights the bottom of the dangling rope. As the flames leap toward the cop sliding down, there's a yell, an explosion, and a rapid fade to black.

Sounds a little like *Tom and Jerry*, doesn't it? And so it is! The pace is kept constantly on the boil. And the jokes, japes, sight gags and comic situations tumble before each other in dazzling quick succession. The plot's (it's the one about the police inspector whose life-long ambition is to bring to justice an elusive master-criminal) but the briefest excuse to parcel together a collection of zany set-pieces: a frantic bedroom scene (timed to the fraction of a split-second), with one lover under the bed, another in a cupboard, a randy husband on the rampage, a string of callers at the door, and an anxious wife shuffling them all around like cards in a deck; a sumptiously mounted fancy dress ball ('Take your hands off my asp' shrieks Cleopatra) containing the most cheerful image to come my way since Kelly danced in the rain—a drunk in a gorilla's skin (are you seeing this?) skipping along waving a sparkler, singing 'Rule Britannia'; and a really expertly staged climatic chase with two identical sports cars being driven by two identical gorilla-costumed drivers careering round a small cobbled square watched over by the most bemused drunk since dear old Jack Norton (whatever happened to him?).

As long as it sticks to super-speed high jinks, *The Pink Panther* is unquestionably the best screen comedy this side of *One, Two, Three*. To be sure, there are a couple of dull spots (especially a longish episode between David Niven and Claudia Cardinale and a champagne bottle), and perhaps more serious—a strange lack of charm; but in view of the all-out, full-throttle pace of Blake Edwards' direction one is tempted to overlook them. All the performances are good. I know it's considered the 'in' thing to deride Peter Sellers of late: but this is one of the best things he's yet done, and one really does tend to forget how good he can be. Both he and David Niven (as the cop and crook respectively) are ideally cast and play with assured ease. The one (Niven) so cool, debonair, unruffled. The other (Sellers) a bungling idiot given to pulling doors marked push: a sort of gallic Magoo.

Outstanding well dressed (the gloss is so heavy it's guaranteed to turn Ross Hunter mauve with envy) and photographed by a man who obviously believes in the value of colour composition (there's a real eyeball jerking shot of Niven in a yellow sweater breasting a ski slope, a puff of snow scuffed up behind him thrown against a birds-egg blue sky), *The Pink Panther* is that rare thing: a thoroughly agreeable entertainment. No if's and's or but's about it. JOHN CUTTS

WHO'S MINDING THE STORE?

Directed by Frank Tashlin. Produced by Paul Jones. Screenplay by Frank Tashlin and Harry Tugend from a story by Harry Tugend. Director of photography, Wallace Kelley. Editor, John Woodcock. Music, Joseph J Lilley. Art directors, Hal Pereira, AJ Roelofs and Roland Anderson. Paramount. American. Technicolor. Cert. U. 90 mins.

Raymond Phiffier, JERRY LEWIS; *Barbara Tuttle*, JILL ST JOHN; *Phoebe Tuttle*, AGNES MOOREHEAD; *Mr Tuttle*, JOHN MCGIVER; *Mr Quimby*, RAY WALSTON; *Shirley*, FRANCESCA BELLINI; *Mrs Rothgraber*, NANCY KULP; *Roberts*, JOHN ABBOTT; *Smith*, JERRY HAUSNER; and *Lady Wrestler*, PEGGY MONDO.

Reassembled, the brighter moments of this latest Lewis-Tashlin piece would make a rousing two-reeler; stretched over 90 minutes they make a not unpleasant, yet distinctly mediocre, farce. It has a story of sorts, the oldie about the rich girl (Jill St John, the poor man's Stella Stevens) pretending to be poor so that Jerry won't be too proud to marry her. And there is the by now pretty usual satire on tough matriarchs (Agness Moorehead with a flaming red mane), meek pops (John McGiver is occasionally worthy of Eddie Mayehoff in *That's My Boy*), and Organisation Men (Ray Walston at his best, whether purring murder plots down the telephone or getting drenched in gold paint). But as with *It's Only Money* the basic story is so corny and slender as to defeat in advance any attempt at fresh satire—it would surely have been more provocative to burlesque something newer and smarter, *The Apartment* or *The Chapman Report*, for example.

As so often with Tashlin nowadays, many of the gags tell funnier than they are, for even the craziest comedy needs a certain dramatic consistency which Tashlin here does not provide. His best films are those where the satirical urge doesn't render the story entirely unreal: hence I prefer *Susan Slept Here, Artists and Models, The Girl Can't Help It, Cinderfella*, to *Oh For a Man, It's Only Money* or this. Jerry's commendable urge to originality sometimes subsides into a self-indulgent satisfaction with the offbeat for its own sake. Here it often seems as if he and Tashlin were hoping for inpiration which didn't come—as in Jerry's encounter with a woman wrestler, or the dog-sitting sequence.

There are some good moments—I dug Jerry's virtuoso performance on an imaginary typewriter, the golf ball running amok in the department store, and a bout with a vacuum cleaner which does everything from suck up the floor to turning itself into a flying dog-trap. There is a classic car pile-up, and a sequence worthy of *The Big Store*, where Jerry in a runaway canoe bounces over a river of rolled carpets, smashes through a linoroll forest and crashes down the staircase rapids. Jerry has a few shortish, brilliant set-pieces — waxing ecstatic over holding his girl's hand. emphasising with a vacuum cleaner, picking his teeth with all ten fingers at once, or rhapsodically French-kissing a pane of glass. The wittiest, weirdest moment has two men, each engrossed in his own agony, hopping frantically about the screen clutching their injured feet; while the golf-lesson Jerry gives his future father-in-law is a neat and original parody of the American self-consciousness about technique. But all in all I'd wait for *The Nutty Professor*. RAYMOND DURGNAT

KISS OF THE VAMPIRE

Directed by Don Sharp. Produced by Anthony Hinds. Screenplay by John Elder. Director of photography, Alan Hume. Editor, James Needs. Music, James Bernard. Art director, Don Mingaye. A Hammer production, distributed by Rank. British. Eastman colour. Cert. X. 87 mins.

Professor Zimmer, CLIFFORD EVANS; *Ravna*, NOEL WILLMAN; *Gerald Harcourt*, EDWARD DE SOUZA; *Marianne*, JENNIFER DANIEL; *Carl*, BARRY WARREN; *Sabena* JAQUIE WALLIS; *Tania*, ISOBEL BLACK; *Bruno*, PETER MADDEN; *Anna*, VERA COOK; *Father Xavier*, NOEL HOWLETT; *First Disciple*, BRIAN OULTON; *Police Sergeant*, JOHN HARVEY; *Servant*, STAN SIMMONS; *Woman in Graveyard*, OLGA DICKIE; *First Girl Disciple*, MARGARET READ; and *Second Girl Disciple*, ELIZABETH VALENTINE.

A honeymoon couple manage to run out of petrol somewhere in Bavaria in 1910, within telescope sights of one of those foreboding chateaux — owner of which turns out to be the head of a vampire cult. Being a perfect gentleman, he invites the stranded couple to dinner, later 'initiates' the bride into the 'society', while husband joins forces with a professor bent on destroying the vampires with their own 'Magic'. One is familiar with all the usual vampires idiosyncrasies, so little time is spent in explaining them: the sudden departures before full light, the tight smile stretching to reveal the fangs, the hurriedly drawn cross to repeal an advance, the garlic smeared on all the exits of the chateau to stop the vampires leaving, the mental telepathy, and, for a grand climax just to keep up with *The Birds*, a mass attack of bats to destroy the vampires.

Kiss of the Vampire has the appearance of being done tongue in cheek, and fortunately lacks the hefty hands that controlled most of its predecessors from Hammer. Technically it is surprisingly accomplished, is excellently balanced between humour and suspense, helped by the fact that the vampires are all very cultured people really. It has the best opening of the series: a funeral is being conducted in Latin, mysterious character appears in background, woman looks up and disturbs the sombre mood with 'I suppose

Sam Spiegel's Horizon Pictures is associated with Caledonian Television, which will wire up Edinburgh.

Two questions uppermost on the minds of film men are: Will people pay for TV in their homes when they can have three or four alternative channels free? And, can the pay-TV people find a daily supply of material that will make more money in the home than being released in the cinemas?

I know many film men of experience who are convinced pay-TV will be a disaster.

Royal night out

Every year the Queen or Prince Philip (this year it is the Prince) supports the Cinematograph Trade Benevolent Fund by attending a charity Royal Film Performance. This year it will be staged in the Odeon, Leicester-square, on February 24.

The film is Michael Gordon's *Move Over, Darling*, with Doris Day. You may remember it was to have been George Cukor's *Something's Got to Give*, with Marilyn Monroe, but it was never finished; and the present film is based on the Monroe project. I haven't seen it. I hope it's good. But if the Royal show is to frequently be of a foreign film, why always an American foreign film? Why not show the Royal family a new Bergman or Fellini? Or is it thought they wouldn't understand it? Or that they regard the United Nations as a concept to be derided? Perhaps, as always, the film boys like using the top people for the 'big sell'.

Shuttered

The Warner Theatre in Leicester-square is to be shuttered for the summer. It will be closed for three months from early May. When it reopens it will have a new look —a wider, bigger screen and projection facilities for the vastly improved 70mm processes. I hear its opening film will be John Ford's new western, *Cheyenne Autumn* (with Widmark and Stewart), which is expected to run on a hard ticket basis (that means more money, to you) until *My Fair Lady* opens in 1965.

The money in it—1

Film men only understand the public in terms of money. It is no good telling them about art. But perhaps those of them among my readers will grasp this simple presentation of fact:

Most critics in recent years have highly praised films made in Italy and France, have not been enthusiastic about the German output, and have been somewhat spasmodic in their praise of British and American films.

In France, a recent report made by the Bureau of International Cinema, states that during the past year cinema attendances have declined 1.7 per cent in Italy, 8 per cent in France, 10 per cent in Britain and 15 per cent in West Germany.

Simultaneously, the secretary of the British Cinematograph Exhibitors Association, Ellis Pinkney, reports that Italy is one of two countries in Europe to have *increased* its number of cinemas in recent years to 11,600 (Britain has 2,400). The other country is Spain. He says the countries on the decline blame better living standards, car ownership, the spread of television and other new uses of leisure time.

Won't the film men *ever* blame themselves?

The money in it—2

The US Department of Commerce, which should know, has told film people that during 1963 cinema receipts in America exceeded £480m, higher than the record year of 1949. In 1964 the department expects receipts to be up another £17m. Why? Because admission prices have shot up in recent years; but also because attendances are rising again.

I'm so sorry for the Hollywood bankrupts.

007

All of Britain's national daily newspapers were excited by the way James Bond made a 1963 box-office kill. They quoted the annual *films and filming* survey with such headlines as Agent 007 Makes a Killing at the Box Office (*Daily Mail*), Now Bond Plays for £3,000,000 (*Daily Mirror*), 007 Makes a Kill (*Daily Sketch*), '007' on Way to £3m (*The Scotsman*).

There was a different line in the *Daily Express*, which noted that the survey suggested that cinemagoers like their heroes to be tough (The Tough Lover Spells Out Big Cash) and even the *Times* was prompted to a personality headline (Man at the Top).

In all, the British newspapers devoted 101 column inches to their reports. The survey has also been reported widely in foreign newspapers.

Cost of assassination

American show business has been estimatin the final bill of a President's assassination. For virtually four days after John F Kennedy was shot dead in Dallas, Texas, cinemas and all places of entertainment throughout the United States were closed, or had few patrons.

The cost to the TV networks of the news coverage and the loss of advertising revenue from commercials has been put as high as £13m.

Meanwhile, Hollywood has some difficult release problems. First, the satirical *Dr Strangelove*, Stanley Kubrick's film in which Peter Sellers plays a US President. Then the straight drama of a similar theme, Sidney Lumet's *Fail Safe* (with Henry Fonda as the President).

Gore Vidal was finishing a script for Stuart Millar and Lawrence Turman, *America the Beautiful*, which Vidal had told friend was a sort of 'Bobby Kennedy Meets John Wayne,' a comedy about Middle West political campaigning.

John Frankenheimer's *Seven Days in May* (about an attempted *coup d'etat* by some top brass of the US Military) may also have a different look in the light of JFK's death.

Several hundred prints of *Take Her She's Mine* were recalled by 20th Century-Fox to re-edit, removing jokes at the expense of the Kennedy family.

Warner Brothers withdrew *PT-109* before it had finished its release. The film was about President Kennedy's experiences as a PT boat commander during the Second World War.

All film studios in the States closed as a tribute to the dead President. When the trade unions asked 'what about pay for those called for work but found themselves mourning instead?' the film companies paid up. And the unions refused to work 'straight time' on the following Saturday to compensate.

The hump

Among the cinema's many entertainments of extraordinarily high quality is David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia*. Producer Sam Spiegel may well be proud of its sheer visual beauty alone. Even the most carping critic of its content must find it hard not to succumb to so many facets that excite the senses and the imagination.

What happens when a local cinema has a film of this stature to show its audiences?

Take the Pavilion, Newcastle, for example. There. the manager arranged for a camel from Chipperfield's Circus to pose at a new city parking meter with the slogan displayed on its side: 'I'm waiting for Lawrence of Arabia'.

I am fed up with seeing down the High Street of almost every community, ushers dressed as monsters, cashiers in film star wigs, and the rewind boy looking soppy in a Roman toga and carrying a rubber spear.

Why do film producers spend millions of pounds making films of undisputed quality and cinema owners continue to advertise them as though they were 1920 peep-shows? I am not concerned with who does go to a cinema as a result of a camel standing at a parking meter; but with who doesn't.

Vision

I am often impressed by the way people with every reason to go sour on life invariably provide an object lesson to those of us who do so, with no good reason. The blind, for instance. I know one film industry telephonist who is blind and who is quite the most efficient and good tempered I know in this fast-paced industry in which efficiency can be bought but in which good temper is reflected only by the nobility of the human spirit.

Then recently Lord Fraser, the chairman of St Dunstan's hosted film men and advertising executives and showed them,

of all things, films produced by a war-blinded film producer, Jimmy Wright DFC, who is chairman of Film City Productions.

Colleague Robin Bean saw the films, made by Wright's company, founded two years ago to produce shorts, documentaries and TV commercials. He was very impressed by the quality of the films he saw.

But even more impressive is the quality of a man, blinded and burned at his job of wartime air-gunner/cinematographer, who is determined of all civil jobs to make films. I hope I have within me even a hundredth part of his courage.

Golden Christmas

Late Christmas note. The Berlin Music Corp has stated that since *Holiday Inn* was released in 1942, no fewer than 40,449,535 records of one of its songs, *White Christmas*. have been sold throughout the world. Many were of the version sung by Bing Crosby. But everyone got on the *White Christmas* bandwaggon, making Irving Berlin's song possibly the most valuable pop song ever under copyright.

Warner tells

Jack L Warner, one of the Brothers of Warner Brothers, has decided to tell all. His autobiography is to be published by Random House during 1964. It should make fascinating reading, for it was Warners that largely rescued Hollywood with sound in the late 'twenties. and built its fortunes with the 'from the headlines' melodramas of the 'thirties. Without Warner there may never have been a Bette Davis . . . and many other famous names.

Churchill premiere

The American producer, Jack le Vein, who has made the documentary reconstruction of a large chunk of Sir Winston Churchill's life, *The Finest Hours,* will give the film a world premiere in the Royal Festival Hall, London, on April 29.

It seems very fitting that the premiere is being sponsored by the English Speaking Union. The film will run about two hours. It is based on Churchill's war memoirs.

From Dirk to Mr H

I see that Dirk Bogarde is making a Festival Hall debut on February 9; but he won't be playing the Warsaw Concerto or even conducting the Pinewood Symphony.

There is to be a Bach Handel concert to mark the silver jubilee of the Citizen's Advice Bureau. And Bogarde is to present a piece of 18th-century satire, an anonymous and recently discovered Letter to Mr. Handel which, I am told, makes some acid points concerning the working conditions of musicians in those days.

Mr B, I am sure, could make some acid points on the current lack of any working conditions (there being no work) for British film-makers today. But the Festival Hall concert is not the place to make them.

Salome, Elektra et al

Munich next summer is staging a season of Richard Strauss operas to mark the hundredth anniversary of Strauss' birth. One of the international artists taking part will be the Metropolitan Opera coloratura Roberta Peters and during her stay in Germany she is to play a key rôle in a film, *The Life of Richard Strauss.*

Apart from a film version of the Rossini opera, *The Barber of Seville,* Miss Peters only other film venture has been in *Tonight We Sing,* the Hollywood biography of impressario Sol Hurok.

Pay-now-play-later

It started with *Cleopatra.* Exhibitors were told that if they wanted to show the film they must put up considerable advance guarantees. They did. And other film companies are being quick to follow.

The film version of *My Fair Lady* will be subject to the pay-now-play-later policy. Producer Jack L Warner has said it will gross £33m. It will have cost £5.7m to film and need a gross of £11m to break even. It opens on October 21 at the Criterion, New York, which is making an advance guarantee of £400,000.

Customers may expect value for money. Advance reports indicate that the screen version at over three hours will be at least five minutes *longer* than the stage original.

33 years late

Passing through Paris a few weeks ago I saw to my surprise that Lewis Milestone's thirty-three year old *All Quiet on the Western Front* was showing in several cinemas in a French dubbbed version and advertised as a new film. Then I remembered. It was banned in France because the French took exception to the First World War as seen through the eyes of a young German soldier. Now it is allowed, better late than never.

Stamps for Cleo

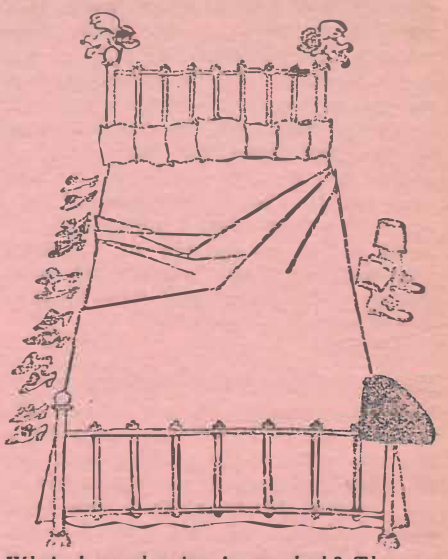
In some places in the United States people can spend their trading stamps on seats for *Cleopatra* instead of those dud scissors, inferior makes of toasters or hideous pieces of china.

And it works the other way, too. If they really want the 'free' gifts they can collect stamps when they buy tickets at the cinema box-office.

I cannot understand why many British cinemas don't issue stamps to patrons . . . licking them and sticking them in their books would give them something to occupy their minds once inside.

Dimension-150

Close on the heels of the one-lense Cinerama, the Todd-AO people have come up with a new Dimension-150. It was shown privately in Hollywood recently and some observers think it a great improvement on one-lens Cinerama which, at times, causes some eye-juddering distortions.



Who's been sleeping in my bed? The clues are designed to lead American cinemagoers to see Britain's most successful export of recent months, 'Tom Jones'. Why can't advertising in Britain have that sophisticated touch; isn't there one sophisticate in Wardour-street?

The new Dimension-150 is photographed and projected with 65mm film. The camera takes four lens giving a range of focal lengths and the projection can. for instance. use a screen 74 feet wide with a curve for 'depth' as deep as 21 feet back.

You are unlikely to see a film in the process until 1965.

Itinerama

When the summer downpour drives you off Britain's beaches this year, you may be able to see a mobile Cinerama show. Called Itinerama, the travelling film circus (it is financially tied up with Bertram Mills), will be moving around with 38 truck-loads of equipment. The big tent is made of steel, aluminium and canvas. It will contain what is claimed to be the largest Cinerama screen in Britain and the second largest in the world.

It will show the first Cinerama film, *This is Cinerama.* Its tour will begin April 21. At the time of writing it is dated for Southsea Common June 18 to July 12. I hope it doesn't blow away.

The Frazer report

Liz Fraser recently returned to London from her first visit to Hollywood, where she played in *The Americanisation of Emily.* She sums up the experience . . .

'So I said to my publicity agents, "Now just because I'm going to Hollywood to play in the film I don't want too much publicity. It might imply I'm now a big Hollywood star and make producers in Britain think I'm too big for the small, same-type parts they keep offering me."

'They took me at my word, for I left London in a blaze of non-publicity and

returned to a fanfare of telephone calls asking if I'd been ill as I hadn't been answering the 'phone. The only person who believed I'd been to Hollywood was my mother, because I sent her a postcard.

'I loved Hollywood, its people and its weather, but when the 'plane touched down at London Airport I was glad to be home. Because of my non-publicity campaign, though, I was relieved not to be carrying one of those great big teddy bears favoured by other film stars. I wonder what they do with then afterwards, anyway?'

New film city

New York was a film city before the pioneers went West. It may soon be a film city again, eclipsing Hollywood. An American Charles Clore, Alan Haynes, has started to develop a site in New York (West 44th-45th St and 10-11th Ave) which will provide a studio with up to 30 stages for major film as well as TV production at a cost of some £750.000.

British film-makers have always benefitted by having studios so near to London because they have had easy access to a lot of highly experienced actors

Incredible

The world premiere of *The Incredible Mr Limpet* (a new Hollywood film about a man who dreamed about living like a fish) took place during January in the world's first 'dive in' cinema. Staged at Weeki Wachee in Florida, an audience of 500 saw the film 16-feet below ground level on a big screen several feet under crystal clear water. Glug, glug.

Chaplin's turn

After Garbo, Chaplin. I see that in the States there is a prospect of a full scale Chaplin revival. It started before Christmas, usually a dull cinema period, when the New York Plaza launched a Chaplin season with *City Lights*. The cinema took over £8,000 in the first week (a record for the theatre), was surprised to find 'teenagers wanting to see the film, and promptly extended its planned two week run into a full-scale Christmas and New Year attraction.

All afraid of Geoffrey Shurlock

All producers are afraid of Geoffrey Shurlock, American Production Code Adiministrator, who has the difficult task of 'censoring' films in the States. He does an incredibly difficult job well.

His present headache is Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* which has had a great success on Broadway. Now it is up for filming and Shurlock has had the honesty to warn producers that if a major company handles it he will be forced to tone down the dialogue and thus damage the work's impact on its audience.

Shurlock has advised that such a work is better filmed for art house showing, as was *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. It's a point honestly made . . . but how many people have been able to see *Long Day's Journey Into Night*? Censorship is indeed a two-edged sword.

His last

Producer-writer-director Carl Foreman said within a few days of reading the notices of his latest film, *The Victors*, 'I have made my last war film'. He has decided not to produce *King Rat*, a novel by James Clavell about a Singapore prison camp during the last war.

Instead, Foreman went off to the States in an attempt to acquire rights from Paramount to the Churchill book, *My Early Life*. Paramount bought the rights a couple of years ago but its enthusiasm for the project has now waned.

Mean as a devil

The cinema men don't like the critics when they write mean things about their films: but you should see what some cinema owners say about the films in their private trade reports.

A choice extract from a report by a cinema group in Minneapolis, referring to *Of Love and Desire*, was recently quoted by the American trade paper *Variety*. It reads:

'In this woman's drama, laid in Mexico, Merle Oberon plays an over-sexed wench who spreads cheer all over. Curt Jurgens is her brother, mean as the devil because he's not getting any, and Steve Cochran, a young man who thinks he can bottle it up for private use. Otherwise it's a clean picture. With a big campaign this round-heel rodeo may do great business in nymphomaniac neighbourhoods.'

Dead

PHIL BAKER, former stage, radio and film comedian, after a long illness, at 67, in Copenhagen.

NICHOLAS BELA, Hungarian born actor and writer who went to Hollywood in 1928 as European talent scout, at 63, in New York, of heart attack.

GASTON BELL, legitimate actor who appeared in many silent films, at 86, in Woodstock, New York.

PIERRE BLANCHAR, French actor whose many films included *Carnet de Bal*, leader of an underground force during the Second World War which prevented retreating Germans destroying French film studios and their equipment, at 67, in Paris.

RALPH T BROOKS, writer-director, who had rôles in 60 films before he began writing, at 43, in Hollywood.

CARLO BUTI, top Italian 'pop' singer of the 'thirties, who made many films, at 61, in Florence.

MERLE CONNELL, independent producer, head of Modern laboratories, former cameraman, at 58, in Hollywood, of heart attack.

SABU DASTAGIR ('Sabu'), chosen at 12 by Robert Flaherty for *Elephant Boy*, later to film *The Jungle Book* and many others, his last being *Rampage*, at 39, in Hollywood, of heart attack.

RICHARD L'ESTRANGE, assistant director who started as actor in *The Squaw Man* and later became a Keystone Kop, at 73, in Hollywood.

EVERETT A FULLER, veteran cameraman for MGM, at one time a clown, at 71, in New York.

ROBERT HAMER, who started work in British films in 1935 and whose most notable contributions were at Ealing as director of *It Always Rains on Sunday* and *Kind Hearts and Coronets*. His last film was *School for Scoundrels*. At 52, in London, after a short illness.

JACK HANLEY, novelist and scriptwriter, at 58, in Hollywood, of heart attack.

JACK HOUSE, veteran stuntman who doubled for Rudolph Valentino, at 67, in Hollywood, of heart attack.

STANLEY D JONES, songwriter-actor, who wrote music for John Ford films among others, at 49, in Los Angeles.

MOLLY KAZAN, playwright wife of producer-director Elia Kazan, at 56, in New York, of cerebral haemorrhage.

KENNETH KENT, who acted in many films but was better known in the London theatre. at 71. in London.

CARL KOCH, who made puppet silhouette films with his wife Lotte Reiniger, at 71, in Barnet, near London.

TOM LONDON (Leonard Clapman), actor who started in *The Great Train Robbery*, was in the first *King of Kings* and went on to play sheriffs in westerns, at 81, in Hollywood.

GUSTAV MACHATY, Czech director whose fame in the States began with his *Ecstacy*, in which Hedy Lamarr swam in the nude, at 63, in Munich.

YASUJIRO OZU, who directed 54 films, among them *The Tokyo Story*, in Tokyo.

VICTOR RIETTI, Italian born actor, director, translator, who played many featured parts in films, at 75, in London, of heart attack.

FRANKLYN D ROCHE, film actor and dancer, at 59, in Burbank.

PAUL H SLOANE, writer-director-producer who started directing in 1923 and who wrote and directed *Forever My Love*, at 70, after a long illness, in Santa Monica.

GUY TROSPER, screenwriter (*One Eyed Jacks* and *Birdman of Alcatraz* among others), at 52, in Hollywood, of heart attack.

LOUIS WEISS, who made the first Tarzan film and many other jungle dramas, at 74, in Beverly Hills, after a long illness.

MICKY WOOD, stuntman who formed his own London studio, at 65, in London, collapsed while coaching an ice skating actress.

MARIO ZAMPI, Italian born British resident, producer of such films as *French Without Tears, Laughter in Paradise, Too Many Crooks*, one of the founders of Two Cities Films in 1937, and wartime internee, at 60, in London.

The sentimentalist

After Rex Harrison at the NFT ('The Actor and the Film-Makers') came the obverse text. with George Stevens ('The Film-Maker and the Actors'). This was the third South Bank homage to an American master in twelve months (Cukor would have made a fourth, but seems to have been postponed; Preston Sturges has proved impossible to set up at all).

We have had Hawks. Vidor and Stevens. Of the three, Stevens is the sentimentalist, less sociological than the enormously admired Vidor, less cavalier than the over-adored Hawks; in fact, the most personally sympathetic of the three, and the NFT has done him proud. Eleven films from his astonishingly versatile output were shown, ranging in time from *Alice Adams* (1935) to *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959) and in temperament from *Quality Street* (1937) to *Shane* (1953). I saw three Stevens pictures that I had not seen before: *Swing Time* (1936), *I Remember Mama* (1948) and *Alice Adams*. What makes them all, in spite of their undoubted over-sweetness, so enduringly enjoyable today? Primarily two things. I think: their style and their truthfulness. The first is expressed in their virtuosity, the second through their actors.

Each of the three I saw recently is quite different in mood and manner. *Swing Time*, a Rodgers-Astaire vehicle conceived along the traditional lines of all such vehicles, is fast and (fairly) tough; *Alice Adams*—whose eponymous heroine is played by Katherine Hepburn—is a romantic satire of genteel poverty and social ambition, which uses a consistent language (much floral imagery of a simple, effective kind), antedates many similarly frustrated Hepburn heroines and in its meticulously timed observance of the social rites anticipates the sophistication of Stevens's own *Giant* (Remember the Texas cattle man at the Maryland dinner party?). *I Remember Mama* is an affectionate. time-suspended chronicle of Norwegian immigrants in San Francisco; certainly one of the most sentimental films you could wish to see, and yet using 'sentimentality' not as it is normally used—by default, as an easy refuge in triteness—but as the basic linguistic medium of the entire film, told as it is by the adoring daughter (the 'I' of the title). There is no dishonesty: the limits are clearly proclaimed, and, within them, it seems to me that the film is a complete success.

There is a clear style in each picture, whether it be sharp and contemporary or slow and reflective; Stevens deliberately adapts manner to matter and never *falls* into a way of doing things. (It will be fascinating too to see what he makes of the Biblical convention, or whether he will stumble where so many lesser men have stumbled before him.) To see a group of these pictures is to realise one of the purposes of these NFT seasons—to reassess in the light of newly discovered evidence. Surely the indifferently received *Anne Frank* would look different now, removed from the totally irrelevant shadow of *Shane* and *Giant* into which too many were too eager to place it?

clubs

by Michael Ratcliffe

So much for the style. The attractive and persistent human truthfulness of these films cannot be separated from this command of style, except to take in some brief consideration of the actors' contribution to both these aspects of Stevens. He has, of course, a tremendous reputation for being an actor's director. Elizabeth Taylor has never again displayed the sheer humanity she found in *Giant*. Actors love Stevens. ('George 'as Shelley Winters is said to have remarked 'photographs what goes on in the air between people'). One certainly remembers the performances: not merely Hepburn and Irene Dunne but, almost more memorable, the supporting players, in each case brought up to a pitch of the highest interest even, at times, threatening the balance of the whole film. Marvellous Mercedes McCambridge the tough, splintered sister in *Giant;* the hideous trio of unmarried Norwegian sisters in *I Remember Mama* (how subtly they, and all the women convey the exact Scandinavian, as opposed to merely Teutonic speech :hythms !); the doctor, even (tiny part), in the same picture, the very epitome of bristling professionalism on the defensive; in *Alice Adams* the fat, contemptuous negress who precisely sizes up the drastic pretensions of the family she is hired, so briefly, to serve; even in *Swing Time* the regulation team of wise-crackers underpinning the two stars (Monstrous Eric Blore, a very mountain of soft *moues* and slippery allegiance, the superbly sour Helen Broderick and the *schmalzy* Victor Moore) seem to take on a particularly histrionic reality from the very vigour of their playing.

Fact is, of course, Stevens gives his actors tremendous space, which is why they love him so. (Far too much space, sometimes: one can no longer take all of Oscar Homolka's gigantic Uncle Chris in *I Remember Mama*). The pathetic parents in *Alice Adams* (Fred Stone and Anne Shoemaker) might indeed not be playing in a talkie at all. Stone in particular takes all the time in the world, but then Shelley Winters was right. Stone's acting is slow, eccentrically paced but absolutely fascinating and encompassing.

LONDON CLUB SHOWS

January 15th to February 18th

National Film Theatre

Jan 15, 6.15 and 8.30 *Yesterday, in Fact* (Rybkowski)
Jan 16, 6.15 and 8.30 *Mrs. Hanka's Diary* (Lenartowicz)
Jan 17, 6.15 and 8.30 *A Voice from Another World* (Rozewicz)
Jan 18, 4.00, 6.15 and 8.30 *Talk of the Town* (Stevens)
Jan 19, 4.00 and 8.30 *The Noose* (Has)
Jan 20, 6.15 and 8.30 *Strosstrupp* 1917 (Zoberlein and Schmid-Wildy)
Jan 21, 6.15 and 8.30 *Weekends* (Rutkiewicz)
Jan 22, 6.15 and 8.30 Experimental Film Fund productions
Jan 23, 6.15 and 8.30 *Weekends* (Rutkiewicz)
Jan 24, 6.15 and 8.30 Polish Short Films, Programme Two
Jan 25, 4.00 and 8.30 *The Noose* (Has)
Jan 26, 4.00, 6.15 and 8.30 *Silence* (Kutz)

Starlight Cinema, (May Fair Hotel)

Jan 15 and week, *I Aim at the Stars* (Lee Thompson)
Jan 22 and week, *Portrait in Black* (Gordon)
Jan 29 and week, *The Manchurian Candidate* (Frankenheimer)
Feb 5 and week, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (Hitchcock)
Feb 12 and week, *Billy Budd* (Ustinov)

W E A (French Institute, London, S.W.7.)
Jan 17, 7.00 *Dispute* (Moore)
Jan 17, 7.00 *Il Posto* (Olmi)
Jan 18, 6.45 *Nanook of the North* (Flaherty)
Feb 14, 7.00 *Time in the Sun* (Eisenstein)
Feb 14, 7.00 *La Strada* (Fellini)
Feb 15 *The Lady with a Little Dog* (Heifitz)
Feb 15 *The Knife in theWater* (Polanski)

PROVINCIAL CLUB SHOWS
Northern Film Theatre, (Manchester)
All shows in Town Hall Extension Theatre at 7.00.
Jan 13 *All The King's Men* (Rossen)
Jan 14 *Les Enfants du Paradis* (Carne)
Jan 20 *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (Siegel)
Jan 21 *Farewell, My Lovely* (Dymtryk)
Jan 27 *Le Million* (Clair)
Jan 28 *The Asphalt Jungle* (Huston)
Feb 3 *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (Dreyer)
Feb 4 *Murder Incorporated* (Rosenberg)
Feb 10 *It Should Happen to You* (Cukor)
Feb 11 *Odd Man Out* (Reed)
Feb 17 *Duped Till Doomsday*
Feb 18 *M* (Lang)

Hollywood Hotel by Brian O'Brien

With British production in its prolonged state of crisis it was interesting to note, while wandering round the empty lots and silent stages of London's major studios, the tonal variations between a Californian, a Michigan and an Oklahoman. For though the studios could never be completely empty most of the current activity owes itself to transatlantic inspiration. There was Roger Corman at Associated British studios where he has moved from Hollywood to make a further two films in the successful Edgar Allan Poe series; producer-director Blake Edwards (*Days of Wine and Roses, Pink Panther*) was working once again with Peter Sellers, at MGM; and Charles Schneer was post sinking and Dynamating his new production with associate Ray Harryhausen and director Nathan Juran at Shepperton—though of course, Schneer and Harryhausen have been based on and have lived in London for the past four years.

The Charles Schneer production *First Men in the Moon* is directed by Nathan Juran in Technicolor, Panavision and Dynamation for Columbia release. It stars Edward Judd, Martha Hyer and Lionel Jeffries. The story is from H G Wells and its screen translation is made possible by Ray Harryhausen. A Hollywood special effects, Harryhausen worked for a long time as first assistant to Willis O'Brien and evolved a copyrighted special effects process called Dynamation. This is the eighth film Harryhausen has made with Schneer in Dynamation and the fourth in colour, following the successful *Jason and the Argonauts*. Director Juran previously teamed with Schneer for *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* and recently *The Siege of the Saxons* which was double-billed with *Jason* for its release in Britain. Dynamation is claimed to be the most elaborate and sophisticated special effects process in use today; it combines optical effects with real action enabling close and interrelated proximity between the actor and the device. One negative must often carry up to four exposures and work towards the final print took seven months before shooting began, another ten weeks of actual shooting and it will involve a further six months work now that shooting is over.

A year ago Schneer listed three points in favour of shooting in England. England was the hub of distribution for English speaking pictures. Living here enabled one to arrive at a form of dramatic expression appreciated in the UK, the US and elsewhere—international pictures; and the enlightened position maintained by a government which supports film production enabled the film maker to carry on with his craft. On the whole this remains true and Schneer finds that with the better audience understanding of a company based on Europe using English actors and screenplays, his sales are stronger and wider than they could have been if relying on a purely transatlantic organisation of production and promotion.

His production recipe demands of a film a story that should be different, that should entertain all audiences regardless of language, colour, creed and national taste, and that is first and foremost visual.

Britain

Imaginative and manifold action, colour and Dynamation would appear to be the basic ingredients, ingredients with which director Juran is well acquainted. Apart from *Sinbad* and *The Saxons* his credits include such disparate titles as *20.000.000 Miles from Earth, Drums Across the River, A Good Day for A Hanging* and *Law and Order* and although he says he never started with the big ambition of making all-action pictures he assures: 'I like making movies anyway and the more fast moving action involved in them the better so far as I'm concerned'.

Future Schneer productions: *The Village that Wandered*, from the book by Surrey Smith in which a piece of Devon breaks of and floats into NY harbour, scripted by Henry Levin, to be directed by Howard Kotsch; and *The Saint with Red Hands*, to be made by Peter Cole.

Catacombs, an Associated Producers-Parroch McCallum production for British Lion has completed shooting at Shepperton. Produced by Jack Parsons and directed by Gordon Hessler (his third British picture) it is the story of a fortune hunter (Gary Merrill) whose marriage to a wealthy, domineering, over-sexed elder woman (Georgina Cookson) is anulled by murder in favour of the wife's niece and with the co-operation of the unfortunate woman's secretary (Neil McCallum). Parsons is directing six pictures for British Lion along much the same lines as Robert Lippert of Associated Producers. The Associated Producers part of the Parsons production title indicates the financial interest than Lippert has in this programme too; his own programme of a dozen short schedule (four weeks) films for 20-Fox, each cast with one American star, was initiated with *The Horror of it All* starring Pat Boone and will continue at Shepperton in the new year.

Also at Shepperton Dimitri Tiomkin is matching the music to a second Bronston epic. After *55 Days at Peking* he is now working on the score of *The Fall of the Roman Empire*.

Back in the 12th Century Roger Corman is organising *The Masque of the Red Death*. An Anglo-Amalgamated — American International co-production it is being made at ABPC Elstree studios. It stars Vincent Price, Hazel Court, Jane Asher and Patrick McGee. *Red Death* is Corman's seventh film in the Edgar Allan Poe series (*The House of Usher, The Raven, The Haunted Palace*). After this one he plans to make one more of similar origin, *Goldbug*, and there the association might end. 'There is a lot of Poe that is attractive and there is a lot of freedom in this sort of work in characterisation and treatment. But I don't want to be the man that only does Poe'. Such a description would in any case be inaccurate for he recently shot a film with a racial theme. *The Stranger*, shot on location in the American South and totally financed by himself; and before *Red Death* he made *The Dubious Patriots* in Yugoslavia.

Corman's first film in Britain was brought here mainly on financial grounds. The labour is cheaper and as set construction is purely a question of craftsmanship, the Eady money granted to British productions enables Corman to build more elaborate sets. The only disadvantage in moving the production from Hollywood lay in the speed of shooting. Corman finds the tempo here slower and is working on a five week schedule instead of the four weeks it takes him to make such films in Hollywood. He is quick to excuse his English crew, however, and points out that his Hollywood team was naturally faster being accustomed to the pace and that there building and set construction was done in shifts around the clock.

The afternoon I was there, Jane Asher was running terrified down one interminable length of corridor. Explained Corman while filming her from different angles in differing directions. 'In this sort of shot it is very important to convey the right length of corridor. You are building up tension that will dissipate in shock of laughter. Audiences will always laugh after a shock for having let themselves be taken in, but for the shot to be successful they must gasp first'. The macabre and occult are represented by Vincent Price and Patrick McGee; asked who was the more deeply evil Price explained: 'I'm alright because I have faith —in the Devil. Pat, he doesn't believe in anything, except girls'.

Something akin to the horror of the *Red Death* one might expect to find in Blake Edwards production *A Shot in the Dark* which involves no less than fourteen sudden sinister demises. The film is written, produced and directed by Blake Edwards, based on, though freely adapted from, the stage play of the same title. The film stars Peter Sellers, George Sanders and Elke Sommer. Sellers plays the bumbling, obstinate Paris police Inspector Costeau assigned to a clear cut case of murder with Elke Sommer cast for the guillotine. Costeau refuses to believe her evident guilt and pursues his case watching helplessly as nearly all his other suspects are eliminated in violent death. The character played by Sellers is a resurrection of that which he developed with Edwards in *The Pink Panther*.

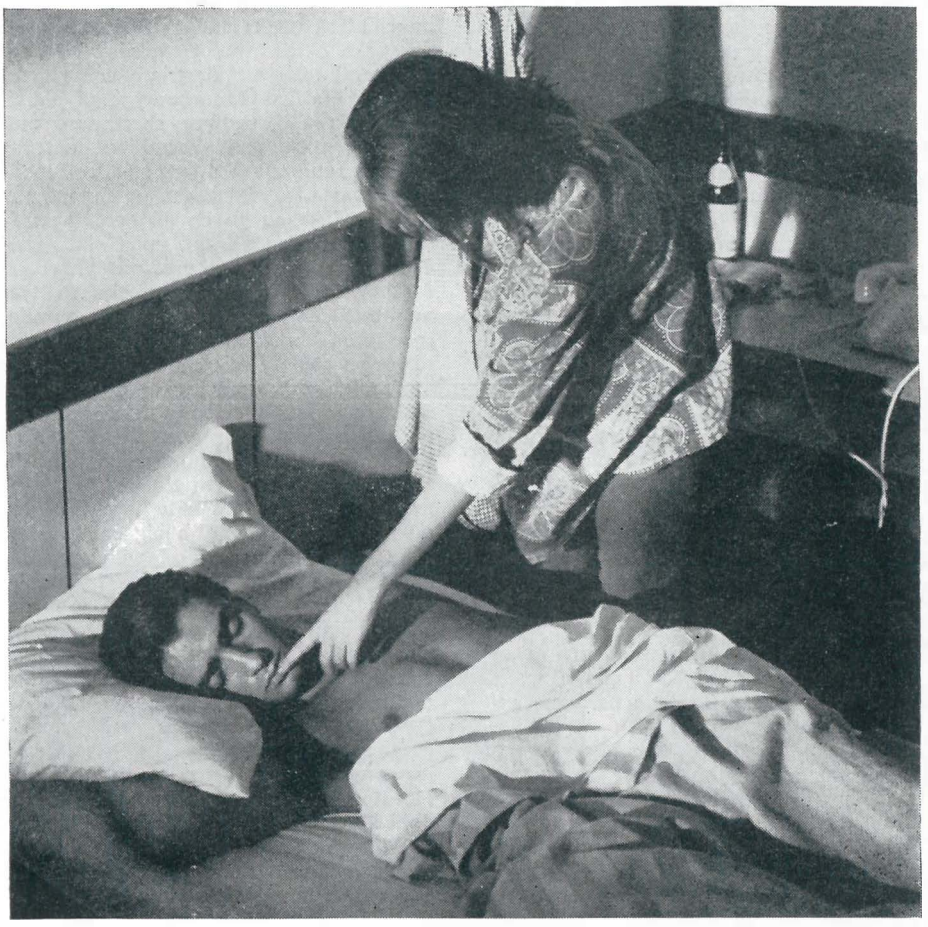
The FOREIGN PAPERS

by PETER BAKER

If you are against the Channel Tunnel, for President de Gaulle's rebuff to Macmillan's Common Marketeers, against the National Health Service being made available to foreign visitors, and for the air lift of deep-freeze fish and chips for British visitors to the Costa Brava, then this survey is liable to give you high blood pressure. Because basically it is about people who know what they like, not aware that they like only what they know. It is about prejudice.

First some facts.

- Jean-Luc Godard's *A bout de souffle* (*Breathless*)—a French film of considerable merit, highly praised by the majority of critics—recovered £8,300 from 130 British cinemas that showed it. In one week, in one London West End cinema, the new James Bond film, *From Russia With Love*, exceeded that: and it will probably be shown in over a thousand cinemas before the end of its run.
- In 1962 the United Kingdom paid Western European countries £437,000 for films and received £1,717,000 for British films (excluding British films to which American distributors have foreign distribution rights).
- In 1962 the Board of Trade registered 71 British feature films, 117 American and 131 Foreign. During the following twelve months the major circuits gave a general release to seven foreign films (six on Rank general release, one on ABC general release) of which at least two might be considered 'runaway' Hollywood productions and not financially or creatively 'foreign'.
- The BBC televised, among other foreign films, Heifitz' *Lady With the Little Dog* (a Russian film of a Chekhov story), and claimed a Friday night peak audience of about four million viewers. If they had paid 2s each the film would have recovered £400,000 less exhibitors' share. If four million people were to see the film in a cinema, at least 500 large cinemas would have to show the film to capacity audiences for a week.



Ugo Gregoretti's 'I Nuovi angeli' is a documentary-styled view of today's youth—the 'new angels' are all about 21 years old, and his film deals with the environment in which they live. An ideal film for Britain's young-in-heart cinemagoers. But will you be able to see it at your local cinema in 1964?

What do such facts actually mean in terms of cinemagoing? Just this. During 1963 the London critics were writing excitedly about Antonioni's *The Eclipse*, Fellini's *Eight and a Half*, Rosi's *Salvatore Giuliano*, Germi's *Divorce—Italian Style*, Malle's *Zazie*, Bourguignon's *Sundays and Cybele*, Chabrol's *Ophelia*, Bergman's *Winter Light*, Buñuel's *Nazarin*, Polanski's *Knife in the Water*, Hoffmann's *Aren't We Wonderful?*, Cacoyannis' *Electra* and Torre-Nillson's *Summer Skin*. And many more. Now, ask yourself if you wanted to see any, or all, of these films? And if you did want to see them, has a cinema near where you live shown them? Your answer to those two questions will bring the state of the foreign film in Britain into sharp focus.

Because many film men believe the majority of British cinemagoers do not want to see anything foreign; and many cinemagoers believe the film men are blind to undeveloped markets for foreign pictures.

Until quite recently fewer foreign films were shown in the United States than in Britain; but in recent years there has been a boom in the States for the foreign picture. The Americans share with the British their supermarkets, pop singers, distrust of foreigners and the English language. So a good starting point for this survey is to find out, objectively, what sparked the American foreign film revolution and how it developed.

I asked MICHAEL BROMHEAD, the general manager of Lion International, who worked for four years in the United States selling and promoting British films, until he returned to London a little over a year ago.

BROMHEAD: The biggest development of all took place during that four years. For Continental films and for our British films, which of course are foreign films for Americans although they do have the advantage of being nearly a common language. The development has gone on in most of the capital cities—New York, Washington, Chicago, Boston, Philadel-

phia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, all the key centres of population, where a number of small theatres have either been built or converted to running specialised films: not for a week here or there, but running them for as long as they will play, sometimes six months at a time. There are now at least 15 theatres in New York that run this kind of product and ten more are in the building stage. It has got to such a state that the old 2,000 to 3,000-seat theatres are closing down rapidly. Even the major Hollywood pictures are starting their run in the small, intimate theatres, as if they were foreign films. Foreign films in the States have led the way to a new type of cinema-going.

B—What kind of money can a foreign film get out of the United States?

BROMHEAD: The biggest British one was *Room at the Top* and must have grossed over 3m dollars, which means that well over 1m dollars came back to Britain. That was exceptional for what to the Americans is a specialised kind of film. (I am not thinking of the kind of money done by a British film like *Lawrence of Arabia* you understand). Take a French film like Godard's *Breathless*: I guess it grossed about 200,000 to 250,000 dollars, which is still a lot of money because it was not an expensive film to make. An exceptional one was Bergman's *The Virgin Spring* which was specialised if any film is specialised; it won an Academy Award for the Best Foreign Film and the sub-titled version alone went on to gross well over 1m dollars.

B—What do you think was the cause of this revolution in the States?

BROMHEAD: Television more than anything else. The public in the States has seven channels to choose from, all playing the same kind of product, and they don't want to go to the local cinema to see the same kind of entertainment all over again. The 'different' answer to their entertainment problem is the foreign film. It started off, as it is doing in Britain, through the sex route. The first 'art theatres' in the States to make money were playing Brigitte Bardot and other very exploitable French films. The more fearless, finding there weren't enough of the sex films to go round, tried some others; and the public liked them, too. At that time the British comedies like *Private's Progress* became popular; and ordinary American people found new worlds of entertainment opened to them. They went back to the cinema; and these 'different' films have now become an everyday part of the American cinema scene, for very general audiences.

B—Do you think the fact that in the United States the exhibition outlet is not dominated so largely as it is in Britain by two groups has contributed to making foreign film such a success in the States?

BROMHEAD: I don't think it made very much difference, although it certainly had some effect. You have in fact, although not two main exhibitors, a similar situation in the States. Instead of the control being nationwide it is citywide. In New York, for instance, there are two main circuits—the RKO circuit and Loew circuit —which are all the neighbourhood houses, equivalent to the local Odeons and ABCs in Britain. Running parallel with them, however, there first started five or six years ago a number of specialised theatres. So there are now two 'commercial' networks and two 'art theatre' networks. A distributor can play his films in several patterns. A strictly commercial film, a Marilyn Monroe type of thing, goes into a Broadway showhouse and onto the RKO circuit, round and out; or you can run your film in a smaller Broadway theatre for six weeks or six months and it will then go on an 'art theatre' circuit and play all the good class residential areas in the suburbs and play each for anything from two weeks to two months. So you have these parallel specialised circuits that have built themselves up sheerly by popular demand and are doing extremely well, often better with their small cinemas than some of the big circuit houses are.

B—How is a foreign film usually shown in the States, sub-titled or dubbed?

BROMHEAD: Sub-titles still have the edge on it; but there is still a big controversy. Usually the film starts off with sub-titles and if it gets into the area of big public demand, then a dubbed version is made. But individual theatre managers are allowed to reflect their audience preferences by taking whichever print they prefer, sub-titled or dubbed.

B—What the Americans call 'buffs' prefer the sub-titles?

BROMHEAD: Yes. If you were playing in Houston, Texas, you would stick the dubbed version in there; but in Philadelphia it would almost certainly be the sub-titled version. They do not have the system we have in Britain where two or three theatres show the first sub-titled print, which is thrown away and then the only available version becomes one of, say forty, dubbed prints.

FOREIGNERS

That kind of expansion has just not happened in Britain. Indeed many producers of foreign films believe the situation has deteriorated. Both the French and Italian film industries in recent months have withdrawn their official delegates from London. M Jean Nery, who represented Unifrance, returned to Paris, leaving a secretary to operate the office with a substantially reduced budget for financing publicity and organising visits to Britain by French artists and technicians.

The Unitalia office has been closed, although the Italian industry's representative, Miss Frances Mullin Clark, continues to maintain contacts. With the prospect of a British-Italian co-production agreement she anticipates the re-opening of the office; but on a different basis than before, because publicity for Italian films is not so vital as it was some years ago now that British distributors are better organised and Italian stars appear in British and American films. She also sees hopeful signs that recently dubbed Italian films (Visconti's *The Leopard*, Germi's *Divorce—Italian Style* or the highly successful *Boccaccio '70*) are helping to 'open up' the market in Britain

But here, from France, is what my correspondent in Paris, PETER GRAHAM, has to report:

'On the whole, French producers of quality films feel that British distributors, and possibly the taste of the British public, do not do their films justice. The British want only sex films. There is no enthusiasm here for the British market —costs are high (dubbing, titling and so on) and very little money can be made because they are often run as second features *if* they reach the major circuits, and the 'art houses' are not numerous enough to be financially rewarding. Producers here feel that much the same is true of other foreign markets (i e that export is a hazardous way of making money). The French do nothing that can be compared with the foreign advertising campaigns that the American giants undertake.

'During 1962 there were 220 British films available from distributors, 19 of them new during the year. There are no special controls on the importation of British films, except for the usual charges which apply to any films from any country.

'Usually, the film's first run (*exclusivité*) will take place at two or more cinemas, one on the Champs Elysees, in a sub-titled version, one on the Grands Boulevards, dubbed. After that, when a film is revived it is usually shown dubbed at the ordinary second run cinemas (cinemas du quartier) and sub-titled at the art houses (cinémas d'art et d'essai). So as a general rule, British films exist in France in two versions.

'Naturally, the native product nearly always does better. There are no cut and dried figures (i e percentage of seats filled) but in 1962 British films accounted for only 3.01 per cent of all seats, whereas French films captured 51 per cent. The fact that there were 159 new French films and 19 new British over the year suggests that, very roughly, French films did *twice* as well as British. Of course, there are exceptions. For instance, *Bridge On the River Kwai*, in the four year period 1957-1961, was 170 per cent more successful than the most successful French film of that period, Jack Pinoteau's *Le Triporteur*. Recently, the difficulty has been deciding what *is* a British film? There is an increasing number of co-productions, or even entirely British productions, which are distributed by American companies. Consequently most French people regard these films as American in origin.

'This is what FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT thinks about the British market for his films:

'"The feeling we have in France about the British market is a pessimistic one. It

STARS

MONICA VITTI
JEAN GABIN
SIMONE SIGNORET
GINA LOLLOBRIGIDA
MAX VON SYDOW
BIBI ANDERSSON
HARRIET ANDERSSON
MARCELLO MASTROIANNI
HARDY KRUGER
VITTORIO DE SICA
SOPHIA LOREN
ANNA MAGNANI
CHARLES BOYER
TOSHIRO MIFUNE
ROBERT HOSSEIN
ANITA EKBERG
JEANNE MOREAU
ALAIN DELON
CLAUDIA CARDINALE
JEAN-PAUL BELMONDO
SYLVANA MANGANO
BRIGITTE BARDOT
ALBERTO SORDI
MYLENE DEMONGEOT
ELSA MARTINELLI

THE BIG SNATCH

SAN JURO

MAMMA ROMA

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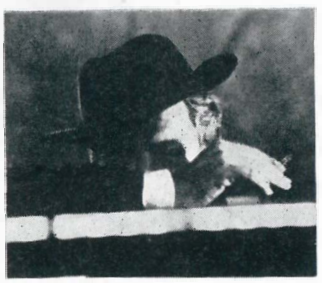
THE CONSTANT WIFE


FELLINI'S 8½

SMOG

SALVATORE GIULIANO

DIRECTORS

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MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI
PIETRO GERMI
RENE CLAIR
CLAUDE CHABROL
AKIRA KUROSAWA
PIER PAOLO PASOLINI
LEOPOLDO TORRE NILSSON
GUALTIERO JACOPETTI
MAURO BOLOGNINI
FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT
ROBERTO ROSSELLINI
LOUIS MALLE
ROGER VADIM
ALBERTO LATTUADA
FRANCO ROSSI
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seems to us that the British film industry over-protects itself and does not favour the distribution of foreign films. To put things in perspective, the films I have made have been bought for less in England than they were in Switzerland, Belgium and Canada. This seems to me abnormal.

'"I've been told that *Les 400 Coups* and *Jules et Jim* were successful in Britain, but I believe this success is completely relative and corresponds roughly to a first run in a single foreign city such as, for example, Milan, Berlin or New York. In Britain, there was no extensive showing.

'"The British public regards the cinema as a show based on collective reactions, like the theatre. This does not help the career of intimate films in which the spectator absolutely must feel alone vis-à-vis the film. On the other hand, this favours family films, comedies, or spectaculars. A material proof of this theory is that while all over the world the spectator is plunged in darkness, in Britain cinemas are obliged by safety regulations to remain over-light, almost like theatres"'.

In Italy, my Rome correspondent JOHN FRANCIS LANE, puts a similar point of view:

'The situation of the British cinema in Italy is summed up in the following figures: in the season 1960/61 there were 32 British films shown in Italy; in 1961-62 this dropped to 20; and last year this fell to 16 which was only 1.6 per cent of the films distributed in Italy (in comparison to 47.9 per cent Italian, 42.0 per cent American and 5.3 per cent French). Of the eight large firms which distribute foreign films in Italy (1st MGM, 2nd Dear (Italian UA), 3rd Fox), Rank is eighth on the list for box-office takings. The only films which Rank say did well last year were *Billy Budd* and *Jig-Saw*, but this 'well' is a relative term. The films cover the cost of dubbing and launching and make a minimum profit.

'The fact is that the standards demanded by Italian cinema audiences have risen. They prefer a good Japanese or Russian film to a fair British one. British films did well when they were quality films, especially the Guinness comedies. This season, *Lawrence of Arabia* is the top box-office success in Rome and Milan (vying with *How the West Was Won* and both of them ahead of *Cleopatra*). *The VIP*'s also counting as a British film, is also in the top five. And it is expected that *Tom Jones* (re-titled *From the Fireside to the Scaffold!*) will do big business. Rank is distributing *This Sporting Life* but is not very optimistic about its chances. An attempt to launch Norman Wisdom films, with the name 'Norman' in the titles (as with 'Toto' or 'Peppino' or 'Alberto' (Sordi) and other popular comics) has not come off. Italians want sophisticated comedies: and this applies to the wide public and not just to the elite of the big cities.

'There are no controls over the entry of British films into Italy. The tax that was payable on all foreign films entering Italy for dubbing has now been abolished. According to a Rank spokesman, there is sometimes some undue interference by censors, insisting on changes in a foreign film of things that would be passed in an Italian film or co-production.

'All films are dubbed into Italian. Two cinemas in Rome and one in Milan show the copies that were used for dubbing (and are usually in a bad condition). These cinemas are run at a loss.

'Italian producers now generally consider the British market as "closed" for Italian films. In spite of great commercial successes in continental Europe, in the US, in the Far East, in Britain only "peanuts" can be earned. Lionello Santi, the head of Galatea, the company which sells a great many Italian films to foreign distributors (*Divorce—Italian Style*, the first Hercules films, *Salvatore Giuliano*) says: "Britain is an impossible market for us. A film like *Giuliano* gets a wonderful reception from the critics and the West End public but doesn't make money in the end. Even *Divorce* hasn't made money outside of London. I think perhaps the British people are too insular in their tastes".

'Producer Alfredo Bini (he made Pasolini's *Mamma Roma* and *Accattone*) has the last word: "I prefer to sell my films to British TV for £1,200. What the distributors pay me rarely comes to more than that. Until they put Italian films in the big circuits it's a closed market for us"'.

RENTERS

How do the men who buy and sell films in Britain, the distributors, react to the foreign criticism that the British don't want to know foreign films? I asked DAVID KINGSLEY, the chairman of British Lion Films, whose company is in a unique position in that it is big, owns no cinemas, and grinds no axes (except a praiseworthy tendency to get behind films of the kind the normal commercial world might overlook). As a result, Mr Kingsley has a particular dislike for the cheaply-made, empty-headed second feature, which is unique to British cinemas. It made a starting point for our discussion because, as I reminded him, the major circuits are convinced the majority of British cinemagoers want a second feature and as, after the first feature has been paid for there is little money left, the chances are that the second feature will always be bad.

KINGSLEY: The major circuits may have undertaken market research to prove this. If they have, it would be very interesting to see it published; but they have not actually published it. Certainly from the unscientific approach, that is listening to people, one gets the impression that most of the public is heartily fed up with these low quality second features and would prefer to see more interesting shorts.

B—Or do you think foreign films of feature length?

KINGSLEY: That is a possibility. The thirty or forty minute short, I believe, has tremendous scope. It is awfully difficult to make a good quality sixty or seventy minute film, particularly when you are shooting off a shoestring very fast which needs a director who really knows his job; but with a thirty to forty minute short you can afford to give opportunities to up and coming technicians. I think this is a far more effective training ground than second features.

B—You have a unique interest in this, because you are the only major *independent* British film distributor in the sense that you are divorced completely from cinema interests but you do have a very healthy production interest. The Americans are concerned with selling their Hollywood-made product; you are concerned primarily with British products.

KINGSLEY: We have a very big studio in this country at Shepperton, which MGM has as well as us; and also we do sell our films competitively between the two major circuits, whereas most of the other renters have a long term trading agreement with one circuit or the other to which the product automatically goes. It isn't in fact on sale between the two: it is delivered.

B—The circuits, or exhibitors in general, say that there is a shortage of product. Is this true?

KINGSLEY: The circuits certainly wouldn't say that. In my opinion you can only look at it from the point of view of the market in which you have to sell. If you are selling British first features costing a hundred and twenty — thirty — fifty thousand pounds, and upwards, you must have a circuit release and as far as a circuit release goes there is a gross oversupply of product at the moment and we are having to wait months and months for a place on the circuits.

B—So why is it that cinema attendances are down if there is a *big* supply of product?

KINGSLEY: It doesn't mean to say that it is valuable as product. I suppose there have in the past been too many poor films obtaining circuit releases. I think up to a point this could be explained because the circuits usually give playing time to films in which they themselves have investments. This is quite natural and proper. If Rank has put a lot of money into a film in the interests of its own shareholders it is quite proper that it should try to get that money back by giving it playing time on their own circuit.

B—But is it a proper way to produce films?

KINGSLEY: Well, of course, no one really tries to produce poor films. They are usually produced in error. In addition to our big successes (our *Only Two Can Play* and *The L-Shaped Room*) we also produce some poor product; but our poor product does not automatically get a circuit release. There is a tendency to believe that poor product coming through Rank or ABC or one of the companies

which has a trading agreement for the circuit to take all its output, gets earlier dates than our product; and possibly this has led to the circuits not always playing the best possible programmes available. I think there has been considerable rigidity in the screening of pictures. I think it would be more healthy if a film not taking money should have its playing time cut down and a film which *is* taking money have extended playing time. Unfortunately the system of release is such that you rush into London general release on a one week basis and you cannot tell in advance whether the film is going to stand up or not.

B—When you refer to reducing, or extending playing time, are you referring to the length of run at a particular cinema or the number of cinemas played?

KINGSLEY: Both.

B—There has been a tendency in recent months to treat the cinema like a TV set. Nearly all the cinemas in one area play the same programme and, in a matter of days, the programme has gone never to be seen again. Some cinemagoers cannot in fact conveniently see the release of either of the two circuits if they do not live near an Odeon or ABC.

KINGSLEY: This is a point that is quite easily put right and should be put right quickly, especially in the case of major successes. A film like *The L-Shaped Room,* it is quite ridiculous that it should be shown only for one week; it would be very much healthier if it was shown progressively rather following the pattern adopted with certain roadshow pictures like *The Guns of Navarone* and *The Longest Day,* playing extended time in an area—four weeks say in six London theatres, then another four weeks in six other theatres, and then into a general release. That is a much healthier pattern.

As regard to Continental films, I think at the moment there are very few which do really big business. But there are a few, and I don't think they are getting all the playing time they deserve. Because of that we are not building up a market for them. In the long run exhibitors are harming themselves in that they are cutting themselves off from a potential source of supply for good pictures.

B—There seems to be a great gulf in the industry between the attitude that 'we are a mass consumption industry which must appeal to audiences in millions' and the attitude that 'we can't be bothered with a small profit because we are only in the business for big profit, therefore we are not concerned with a booking at twenty or thirty cinemas of a specialised film.'

KINGSLEY: But they should be. Unfortunately for various reasons there are far too few cinemas showing specialised films. An exhibitor cannot chop and change. A cinema that goes over to the specialised type of film must stick to it. There are far too few cinemas that have chosen to do that as a policy. I believe that many more could.

B—There are films that although we call them 'Continental' are in fact English-language pictures which do not fit the established commercial pattern. You have handled several yourself.

KINGSLEY: We have *David and Lisa,* we hope to handle *Lord of the Flies,* then there are *The Trial* and *The Balcony.* They are all pictures which could play the so-called 'art house'. In addition the 'art house' can also play re-engagements of films like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* or *I'm All Right Jack.* There is always an audience for a certain type of film.

B—What are your problems going to be in selling this particular group of extraordinarily good pictures?

KINGSLEY: The problem is going to be that there are not enough cinemas that have built up the clientel for this type of film.

B—How many such cinemas in Britain are there?

KINGSLEY: At a guess about 50. But a film like *David and Lisa* could make a big breakthrough and do far better than that.

To check on a few releases—*The Bridge,* directed by Bernhard Wicki, was an extraordinarily good German film. So far it has played 135 cinemas in a dubbed version; but the gross is just under £6,000 which is very very small. We have ten prints, which would cost about £1,000; and there are administrative costs. Godard's *The Little Soldier* was a good film. It has played 131 situations using only two prints and has grossed just under £6,000. And Godard's *Breathless* has played 130 situations and has grossed £8,300. That is about the order of it for a *successful* foreign film.

B—So from the money-making point of view you cannot be expected to take a very great interest in this kind of product?

KINGSLEY: Looking at it purely from this year's profit and loss account we forget all about them. But looking at it from a long term viewpoint, thinking what the industry may live on in the future. I think it is well worth persevering with this type of picture, in the hope that we can gradually build up audiences and help the exhibitor and help ourselves.

B—Do you think there is a need for exhibitors to be organised in some kind of booking association?

KINGSLEY: No. The less organised they are the better. Let us have some straight forward competitive trading. Let each exhibitor book what he thinks is right for his own audience and keep it on as long as he can. What kills competition is the combine booking arrangement where the booker says 'I must have that for every theatre'. Another interesting example. *Battle Inferno* was a German film (Frank Wisbar's *Hunde, wollt ihr ewig leben?*—Ed) which was very carefully dubbed and re-edited by John Boulting, who spent several weeks and a great deal of money doing it. As a result, that went out without any circuit release and was accepted by smaller cinemas as an English-language film virtually. It has played 1,174 bookings and grossed £20,000; but that is not a lot considering we had to have thirty prints and heavy dubbing and re-editing costs. There will be no profit in it for us; but it shows it is possible to put over a foreign film if we can only build up a market for them.

B—You are also demanding of the exhibitor a considerable amount of intelligence. Do you think the average cinema exhibitor has sufficient intelligence to know what films to book and, having booked them, how to develop his audience? The old fashioned man who had a cinema which was once an ice-skating rink and which he developed during the boom of the 'thirties, that kind of man is out of the business?

KINGSLEY: There may be a few; but we have a lot of younger men coming along who are managing their cinemas on a far more flexible basis.

B—The circuits obviously cannot give a first feature release to a film like Godard's *Breathless,* it would be foolish to expect them to, but do you think that the two major circuits between them are doing as much as they could do to date-in quality foreign films in specialised situations?

KINGSLEY: No; but they are beginning to get a little bit more flexible. In selected situations they are beginning to take a Continental film occasionally. I think they need to do it much more often and as a more consistent policy. The exhibitor who ought to be doing this is the exhibitor who cannot get the weekly Rank or ABC release programme, and sometimes because of duplication that happens also to be a cinema owned by Rank or ABC. But the cinema not taking the main week's release goes on playing a pretty poor run of product and this product never will be any better, it is no good the exhibitor thinking that it will, because the economics of the industry are such, and this 'third release' will be from the bottom lot of films. It is no good these cinemas complaining. If the cinema is in a suitable position, the exhibitor can try to create a policy for his house; and if he can build up a more discerning audience, he has some hope for the future. He doesn't necessarily have to be in what is called a 'high class area' as long as he is accessible to everyone and has a car park, because people are prepared to go to a cinema a long way away if they know they will have comfortable service and the type of film they want.

B—What kind of gross could a distributor collect on a Continental film if everyone in the industry tried to get behind these films?

KINGSLEY: There are plenty that have already done £100.000, films of exceptional general interest like *La Dolce Vita.*

B—Let's take the average quality film, one that doesn't enjoy a major circuit release.

KINGSLEY: As of now, I don't suppose you would do more than £15,000 at the best, probably nearer £10.000. But there are certain types of foreign films which

you are not talking about which do extremely well. The hokum picture. We have a film called *The Mongols* (Leopoldo Savona—André de Toth's *I Mongoli*—Ed) with Jack Palance and Anita Ekberg which has done extremely well, better than most English and American films films on the 'third release'.

B—*films and filming* tries to avoid thinking in terms such as 'art film'. We like to consider films as being good of their kind. If it is good of its kind, a foreign film should be shown just as much as *Cleopatra* is shown.

KINGSLEY: On the whole they are. But the circuits don't like dubbed films on principle.

B—What is the principle?

KINGSLEY: I don't quite know, I think it is that the audience pays to see a 'proper' picture.

B—And a dubbed film is not 'proper'?

KINGSLEY: They don't like dubbed films for circuit release. You will have to ask them why. It may be based on experience. They have done it on very rare occasions.

B—We find that readers state they prefer to see a foreign film in its original language but with English sub-titles. Is your experience otherwise?

KINGSLEY: I think you will never make the big break-through with an original language version. A film like *The Mongols* could never be shown in a sub-titled version. In the end we must dub films or we will always have a very limited audience. I know people complain that if you take away an actor's voice you are taking away the equivalent of his right arm. But on the other hand, if you don't understand a word he is saying—and 99 per cent of the public doesn't—you have taken his right arm away anyway. At least you have given him an artificial limb if you dub in a voice the audience can understand. It is wrong to leave people to read sub-titles; if people have to read, they cannot be watching the picture.

The English language specialist film is tailor-made for the art house. Films like *The Caretaker* and *David and Lisa*.

Of course, Mr Kingsley's company distributes only a very small proportion of all the foreign films shown in Britain. The real specialist is KENNETH RIVE, the managing director of Gala Films which, since its recent agreements with Columbia and Miracle Films, now handles by far the largest number of imported pictures. Mr Rive has associates in the United States, Janus Films, so I returned to the theme of the expansion of foreign films in the States, suggesting that the producer can now release these through the 'art houses' and recover quite a bit of money.

RIVE: It is not quite that. There is no longer an 'art house' in America. There used to be; but today the big houses take what we in Britain call the 'art house film'. On the other hand Americans do not consider the art film merely to be Fellini. The biggest box-office take for them in 'art films' will be Britain's *Tom Jones*.

B—What has caused the slow down in Britain? You have been associated with the distribution of specialised films now for many years more successfully perhaps than anybody else, and in spite of all this it is far from a common thing to see a foreign language film being shown in cinemas outside of London.

RIVE: The difficulty here is playing time. In the States, cinemas are 80 per cent independent. In Britain there is an ABC and a Rank circuit and you find they are booked up months ahead with product. They have a steady flow coming from their own suppliers and unless you have the exceptional film . . . but *I* don't know what is the exceptional film. In all fairness to the circuits, you take a film like *Le Repos du Guerrier, (Warrior's Rest)* which we have just put out. I didn't think it was a bad film. I thought it was a commercial type of film. It was very well dubbed. Well directed by Roger Vadim, with Bardot, James Robertson Justice. The Rank boys gave it a very good deal on the circuit, it went out on the National (the 'third circuit'—Ed) but with half the best Odeons thrown in—Swiss Cottage, Kensington, Victoria—we had a hell of a pasting. We advertised, took whole pages in the *Evening Standard,* did a very big campaign as good as one does for any American or British film, and yet it died. So obviously, it is very difficult to get the next foreign film out.

B—Surely the real need is for cinemas to build up an individual identity? Not for the local Odeon or ABC to show one kind of film one week, another the next.

RIVE: You can take another film that went out on circuits cinemas, *Eve,* which did marvellously. One of the films you didn't expect to go, and the film you did expect to go, just doesn't go.

B—Are you suggesting that there is something different between British cinemagoers and American cinemagoers?

RIVE: The Americans are more international in their outlook, yes. Particularly if you take New York, which has a ready made audience of hundreds of thousands for any Italian film for a start. Although you hear a lot about American interest in highly specialised films, it only happens in New York. Now you take the work of Fellini. Outside of New York it doesn't take very much money.

B—You say it has opened up a lot in Britain.

RIVE: It has opened up to the extent that you can get a foreign film on the Shipman and King cinemas, Essoldo cinemas and ABC give you quite a number of cinemas where they have difficulty taking the normal general release and the same applies to Rank. There is a much wider opening for a good film . . . well, when I say a good film I don't know any more what *is* a good film. I consider films like *The Eclipse, Eight and a Half* and *Les Abysses* good films; but unfortunately you can still take more money with things like *The Train Robbers* (Roberto Farias' *O Assalto ao Trem Pagador,* from Brazil —Ed). London takes care of itself. Where

Vittorio De Seta's first feature; 'Banditi a Orgosolo'. A shepherd is wrongly accused of killing a policeman, and is eventually forced to take to the hills as a bandit

Henning Carlsen's 'World of Strangers' (Denmark) deals with race prejudice and the class structure in South Africa

War seen with lyrical style: Andrei Tarkovski's first film 'Ivanovo detstvo' ('Ivan's Childhood')

ANNOUNCING A COMPETITION

In the entrance lobby at the Cameo-Poly is a graph showing the popularity of films first presented at this cinema.

Many of these films would never have been seen by British audiences had the Cameo-Poly not premiered them.

The economics of importing Continental Films is such that unless a Premiere West End Run can be arranged for a new film its chances of being released in Britain are very slender.

Although the Cameo-Poly commenced its Specialised Policy in 1948 it has offered too many pictures to present on a graph in a limited space. The graph, therefore commences at 1954. If you would care to go along and see it we think it will interest you.

The following competition is not interested in the popularity of films ; only in your personal opinion of your favourite film. For what we consider the best three letters (each not to exceed 500 words) telling us which was your favourite, and why, from the list below, we will send each of the three winning entrants a Pass for two persons to see each film to be presented at the Cameo-Poly for one year between April 1st, 1964 and March 31st, 1965. Entries must be received by us on or before February 15th, 1964. Winning entries will be announced in our advertisement in the May 1964 issue of this magazine. Passes will be sent to the winning competitors in advance of the announcement.

Windfall In Athens
The Sheep Has 5 Legs
The Last Bridge
Caprice De Caroline
Lovers Of Lisbon
Moulin Rouge
The Village Feud
French Can Can
The Fiends
The Light Across The Street
The Card Of Fate
10 Days To Die
The Heroes Are Tired
The Wicked Go To Hell
The Dressmaker
The Swindlers
Roman Holiday

Gervaise
Lock Up The Spoons
Pepote
Search For Bridie Murphy
The 7th Commandment
The Bride Is Too Beautiful
Crime and Punishment
The Hare In the Soup
Mitsou
A King In New York
The Right To Be Born
The Sheep Has 5 Legs

An Eye for An Eye

His Greatest Role
The Brave One
Yambao
The She Wolves
Cabiria
And Woman Was Created
A Question of Adultery
Vive Monsier Blaireau
The Face Of The Cat
Day Of Triumph
Evidence In Concrete

Blonde For Danger
The Young Have No Time
Fortunella
Life Together
Night Is Not For Sleep
The Possessed
My Uncle

The Lovers
Waiting Women
Lift To The Scaffold
Lunch On The Grass
Rififi And The Women
The Trials of Oscar Wilde
L'eau Vive
Jazz On A Summer's Day

Love And the Frenchwoman
The Colour Of Love
My Uncle
Caged
The Cow and I
Suddenly Last Summer
The Trials of Oscar Wilde
Plein Soleil
Lovers of Montparnasse
Infidelity
Rocco And His Brothers
The Knife

The 9th Circle
Last Year in Marienbad
Hand In Hand
Jules & Jim
The Splendid Days
Suicide Pilots
Rendezvous at Midnight
Diferente

Through A Glass Darkly
The Eclipse
Electra
Devil And The 10 Commandments
Warrior's Rest
Look Back In Anger
Vice and Virtue
Fellini's $8\frac{1}{2}$

Address your entries to :— The Director, Cameo Competition, 35, Charing Cross Road, LONDON, W.C.2.

The CAMEO-Poly

Internationally Speaking — Britain's Most Distinguished Cinema

Oxford Circus, London, W.1.

we have trouble is outside—Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow are all right and a few others—but try booking in Salford or Bootle and it is a very different picture.

B—How many bookings can you get in Britain on a film once it starts going ?

RIVE : Take a film like *Mondo Cane* which has been exceptional, even though it did not have a British Board of Film Censors certificate. It will finish up with 750 to 800 bookings. Every local authority has given it a certificate. But you can go along with an average film and you are lucky to get 50 bookings.

B—That is not going to yield a gross of more than two or three thousand pounds?

RIVE: No, it won't. On the other hand you can go out on a very big release, like we did with the Rank release of *Le Repos du Guerrier,* and it might bring you in even less than a couple of thousand. You may even be owing some money to yourself.

B—That is because you must have a dubbed version, make a large number of colour prints and spend a lot on advertising?

RIVE: Precisely.

B—So to remain in business a distributor of foreign films has to have a very large supply of product, each making a small return ?

RIVE: You have to have a very large supply. But you also have to have a tie up with the exhibiting side of the industry. In the West End we have four cinemas of our own and a tie up with the Cameo giving an outlet through seven. We are also associated with Columbia on distribution ; but we haven't got sufficient good films today to fill the halls.

B—There were about 130 foreign films registered at the Board of Trade, excluding American, in the last twelve months.

RIVE: They might be on on Monday and off on Wednesday. It sounds a lot a hundred, but it isn't really, particularly if you are going to play double feature programmes.

B—But surely with this rapid turnover you are never going to be able to build up sufficient advance interest in films to make people want to see them ?

RIVE: It is not always that easy. If a film comes off because of lack of support, you have to put something in quickly. How then do you build up interest ? A film came off at the Berkeley this week, so I put in a replay of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* as a stop gap before we play *Les Abysses* for which we immediately start a campaign to build up interest. The real secret of launching a foreign film in Britain, is timing. Also the press show. If we can pick a nice quiet week we get the space, good or bad, but if you come up against *From Russia With Love* or *The Birds,* it doesn't matter what you've got, it will be buried at the end of the columns.

B—You mention timing. I remember a few years ago that even if a foreign film was getting a lot of press publicity from festival and other overseas showings, it was at least a year, sometimes two, before it reached Britain.

RIVE: That is often because of the price asked. It was a long time before we could reach an agreement on *La Dolce Vita.*

B—My correspondents overseas tell me that producers regard the British market as the least important of their export markets.

RIVE: I think the average producer does. It is a very small market. On the other hand the situation is changing because the major companies, notably the Americans, are buying the rights for half the world. That is why I am very glad that I did a recent deal with Columbia whereby I handle in Britain their foreign language films. It means we have the next Clouzot film, the next Visconti film and so on, we can look ahead to 1964 as films go into production overseas in 1963. Producers are never satisfied anyway, whatever they get.

B—Do you buy films outright ?

RIVE: It is almost impossible today to acquire films without an advance guarantee, followed by a percentage arrangement. We prefer to buy them outright if we can as that enables us to play about with our second features and their internal allocations when releasing a double bill. Foreign producers are seldom used to double feature territory because they are so used to playing their films on their own.

B—Are there prospects for more foreign films playing the major circuits as second features ?

RIVE: There is a possibility for more and more playing that way, but who's going to supply them ? I wouldn't supply one of my films as a second feature. I wouldn't get my money back if I did. I've been offered dates ; the circuits are very good, they say ' it can go in with this, or it can go in with that ' ; but you take a second feature price, which on the circuits today amounts to £4,500. It is the allocation for second features agreed by the Kinematograph Renters Society with the major companies.

B—And to recover that you have to supply considerably more prints than for a more limited release ?

RIVE: Certainly we do. About 40. I make my money by carefully selecting my situations and playing with extended playing time . . . *Mondo Cane* which played ten weeks in Birmingham and seven weeks in Manchester.

B—You have a reputation for giving your foreign films saucy titles, leading up to your clash with the censor who declined to give *Le Repos du Guerrier* a certificate unless it was translated factually as *Warrior's Rest* and not called *Love on a Pillow.* Is it really necessary to distort titles ?

RIVE: I admit we change titles. For example, if you call a film *La belleza di Ippolita,* it may be alright for you ; but how do you think I could go up to Solihul and ask an exhibitor to buy a film with that title ? I can't. The title is useless. So we call it *She Got What She Asked For.* It is a title that sells and from the producer's point of view he does better in the long run.

'The real secret of launching a foreign film in Britain, is timing'

B—Would you do that to Antonioni ?

RIVE: Never. Not with a film of universal artistic merit. It wouldn't be fair. Same with cutting ; I wouldn't cut one frame of such a film.

B—The foreign film started in America, as one distributor put it, ' along the sex route '. Will it go on that way ?

RIVE: What are the big successes in the States at present ? You have *The Conjugal Bed, Divorce—Italian Style* and *Tom Jones.* Take our associates in the States, Janus Films, they wouldn't buy a film if it wasn't of exceptional integrity and quality, they are like George Hoellering's Academy in London ; but they are having a very precarious time. They do very well in New York, but outside they have great difficulty getting their money back unless they have a dubbed version for the drive-ins, for example.

B—Normally you don't use a dubbed version.

RIVE: No, but we are becoming more involved with dubbed versions now, because of our American tie-up. I personally wouldn't dub a film at all, but if we have a dubbed copy delivered here and we can sell the film in a town that otherwise wouldn't take the film at all, obviously we sell it. But in London we always show the original version and also in the key cities.

B—I have heard that the major circuits only want a sub-titled version.

RIVE: That isn't true, although it depends on the quality of the dubbing. I defy you to notice the dubbing when it is well done. After all, all Italian films are shot silent and then the sound added.

B—But the difference in cost to you is between £200 to £300 for a sub-titled print and £2,000 to £3,000 for a dubbed version?

RIVE: A dubbed version costs considerably more. At least £5,000 unless you are going to be satisfied with a poor job. So you have to be sure of a wide distribution to justify the cost.

B—A lot of money—I heard £20,000—was spent on the English language version of *La Dolce Vita,* but when it went out on release, no one seemed to like it.

RIVE: Even though Fellini supervised it, that particular film was so full of Italian atmosphere that the dubbing completely ruined it. As a result it played principally in the original version with sub-titles.

B—Surely this will always be the case with a quality picture ? Can you imagine *The Eclipse* being dubbed into English ?

RIVE: But now you are going to the extreme.

B—About film societies. Do they mean much to you ?

RIVE: Yes, indeed. There are 300

'The critics are our bread and butter. I like them to be controversial'

societies, some showing on 16mm others on 35mm. One night booking for a film society is often more profitable than servicing a week's booking by some commercial cinemas. Some cinemas only take £100 to £150 in a week ; and we have to service the booking, look after film cartage, pay a share of advertising and so on. Not every renter services a film the way we do.

B—Advertising is one of your big overheads ?

RIVE: It has gone haywire. Some other distributor will take a whole page in a national newspaper for his film. So what do you do ? You can't take a one-inch single column. If they are going to do it, then we have to do it. You really must advertise today ; yesterday we couldn't afford to do it, but we do today.

B—Some films sell themselves.

RIVE: To a point, yes. Any film by Fellini is pre-sold to a certain Fellini audience.

B—Do you have any idea what film will catch on and what will not, before it has been reviewed by the critics ?

RIVE: I like to think I can follow my nose. If I wasn't right most of the time, I would get out of the business. That's why I always buy alone ; I don't want anyone else with me when I am seeing a film for the first time. I am usually right in my choice about 75 per cent of the time.

B—Where do you see films ? At festivals?

RIVE: No. I go to Cannes because there I can meet the overseas buyers. I aim at seeing films *before* they ever reach a festival. I dash to Scandinavia, back to Germany or France, and so on. This is when you get the thrill in buying films, to find that three months later the film you have bought has been accepted for a festival and, even better, wins a prize. *Hiroshima mon amour* I had acquired before its festival showing, before the critics or anyone else had seen it and written about it. I was worried ; but I felt that I had something.

B—And if you buy before a festival, before the prizes are handed out, you can acquire a film on the most favourable terms ?

RIVE: Far more favourable. But today it is more and more difficult for an individual to buy a picture because today it is big business and the big American companies. even ordinary big business men, are going into Europe and putting investments in productions before they start.

B—Why have you gone into British protion—*During One Night, The Boys,* and now *Devil Doll* ?

RIVE: We are planning for the day when Britain goes into co-production with Europe. Talks are still progressing. Then we shall go right into it in partnership with France and Italy and other countries. But getting British pictures played in Britain is not easy ; the two circuits have a glut of product. Take *The Boys.* If we could have waited we could have had a full Rank release and there would have been no trouble ; but when you have money tied up you cannot afford to sit back and wait and when I was offered the National (third circuit) release I took it, but unfortunately there wasn't enough build up to make it pay, and not enough cinemas ; but it did very well on that particular circuit, better than average.

B—Where your foreign films are concerned, what effect do the critics have ?

RIVE: The critics are our bread and butter. I like them to be controversial. Like they were over *Eight and a Half.*

B—But you don't like them to ignore it ?

RIVE: Sometimes I am happy when they do ignore a film, yes. There are some films that I think not worth our press showing, but we usually have to contract with the producer that it will be press shown. I sometimes feel that I am wasting a complete morning showing the critics a film that I know they are not going to like.

PERCY LIVINGSTONE is managing director of 20th Century-Fox, a company associated with everything ' big ' in the cinema —from the pioneering of Cinemascope, stereophonic sound and ' roadshows ', to the mammoth *Cleopatra.*

I was not surprised to find that his attitude to the foreign film is that, at its best, it should stand shoulder to shoulder with the best from Hollywood or Britain. In short, the distributor should not reach down and give it highly specialised treatment ; if it is any good at all it will appeal to a big audience.

He can justify this attitude with the remarkable success of *Boccaccio '70,* which played 524 British cinemas during the first few weeks of its release and will finish up with about 1,500 dates. And he is as confident of the prospects for *The Leopard.* After all, it has a top star name —Burt Lancaster—and an impeccably dubbed English dialogue track. Mr Livingstone believes that star names are as important to foreign films as to British or American pictures (although I suspect the presence of Loren in *Madame* and Mastroianni in *Divorce—Italian Style* were not sufficient to set out-of-London cinemas ablaze).

20th-Fox has shown a praiseworthy respect for the specialised audience even if it refuses to bow to them. In London it has frequently opened one of its foreign films at the Curzon in the original language version and played the English dubbed version concurrently at the Rialto. Out of London, cinema owners have had the choice of either version ; but invariably they have asked for the dubbed version.

Mr Livingstone finds the major circuits, notably the Rank Organisation which normally takes his company's product, increasingly more flexible in their booking policy. If a film is not suitable for a general release it may be taken by about 60 Odeons not taking the general release programme ; but quite probably it will be considerably more than this. The fact that 20th-Fox *is* a big company enables it to look after a ' difficult ' film in a way that perhaps a smaller company cannot do.

I found Mr Livingstone convinced that audience's tastes are becoming more critical with a generally higher standard of education, although he felt that many critics are too far ahead of their readers. He sees the involvement of the major American companies with European film making and distribution as a logical development.

His one regret : British cinemagoers are more insular in their outlook than their American cousins.

CINEMAS

The people most close to the paying cinemagoer, are the cinema owners. Britain now has about 2,400 cinemas, of which 352 are controlled by the Rank Organisation (the Odeons) and 279 by Associated British Cinemas (ABCs). Rank cinemas have about 22 per cent of the national seating capacity and ABC about 18 per cent. They are the best seats, because a circuit release for a film will recover about two-thirds of its total United Kingdom returns ; and when a film has a circuit booking, many smaller circuits and independent cinemas follow their leader like sheep and book it as well.

Of course there are some cinemas in Britain that specialise in showing only quality foreign films. Most of them — such as the Academy, Cameo-Poly, Paris-Pullman, Everyman, Curzon (when it is rebuilt) — are in London : and there are a few outside of London. But I doubt if there are more than 25 throughout the country that regularly show foreign films, apart from the frankly sensational and trivial. Although some of the Classics take the cream of them.

A man who knows as much as anyone about specialised cinemas in Britain is BASIL CLAVERING, who runs the Cameo-Poly, Cameo-Royal and Cameo-Moulin in London's West End, and two repertory theatres, the Cameo Victoria, and the Leicester Cameo.

CLAVERING : Our two halls at Walthamstow and Leyton have had to go over to bingo. There the Americans were silly because if the distributors had made their terms lower, or given us flat bookings instead of percentage we might have carried on. We were losing several thousand pounds a year at each hall but now with bingo things are evening out.

B—Could they not go over to repertory like the Classic cinemas ?

CLAVERING : We tried. We tried everything. Single features, double features, Continentals . . . the lot.

B—Surely to establish an identity for a new policy you must stick to that policy for at least a year ; and that itself can

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Donald Pleasence
Alan Bates
Robert Shaw

Producer Michael Birkett
Director Clive Donner

Anthony Perkins

in Orson Welles' film of Franz Kafka's

THE TRIAL

Jeanne Moreau Elsa Martinelli
Romy Schnieder Akim Tamiroff
Orson Welles

Producer Alexander Salkind

Shelley Winters

Peter Falk Lee Grant Ruby Dee

THE BALCONY

Directed by Joseph Strick
From the play by Jean Ganet
Screenplay by Ben Maddow
Music of Igor Stravinsky

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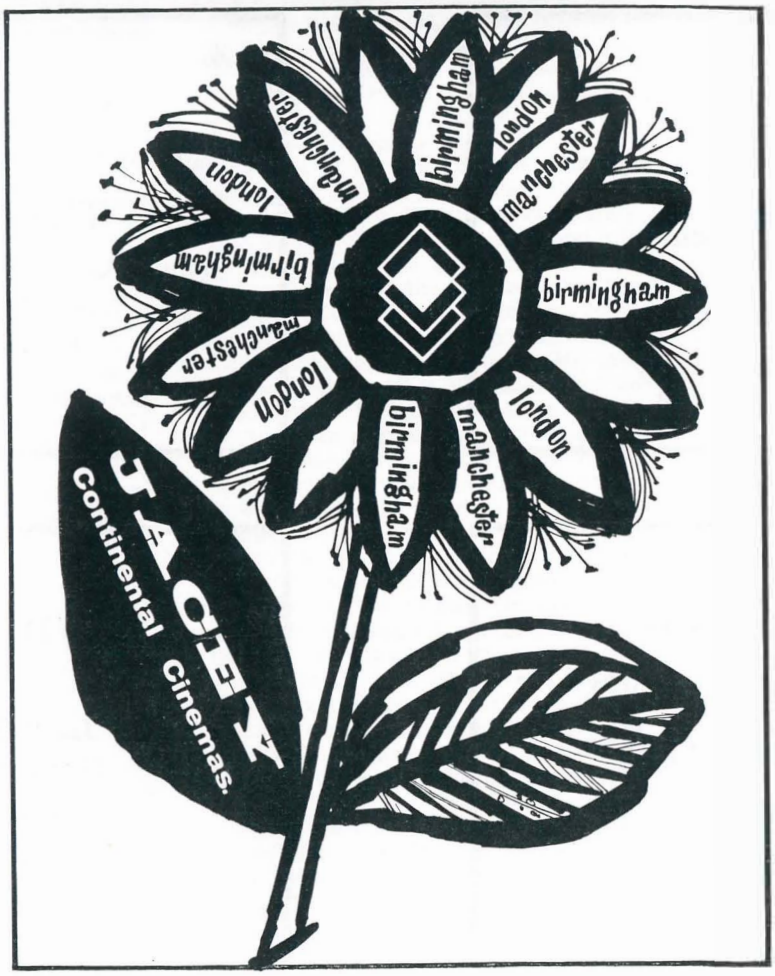


become economically ruinous ?

CLAVERING : It depends as much on the position of the cinema and how much you can afford to spend on advertising. If you have the Empire Leicester-square, even after it has been shut for two years, you can spend thousands of pounds on advertising and it's off from the word 'go'. On the other hand take the Prince Charles. They didn't advertise and half London doesn't know where the Prince Charles is now. But the Columbia in that wonderful position in Shaftesbury-avenue goes up and down like a yo-yo ; it hasn't any policy . . . a French film, a dubbed film, a British film, they put on *La Dolce Vita* and its packs out, they put on another film and it comes off in three days, they don't know where they are. You have to have a policy for a cinema.

B—Of the five cinemas you operate you are representing three different kinds of cinema.

CLAVERING : Four different kinds. Repertory at Leicester and Victoria. Highly specialised art films—horrible expression but what else have we ?—like Fellini, Antonioni, Visconti, Bergman, Resnais at the Cameo-Poly ; but these we would not dare put on at the Cameo-Royal, except on the rare occasion like Visconti's *Rocco,* which we ran at both halls. At the Cameo-Royal we show the middle-of-the-road, the commercial Continental picture, but not dubbed. If we put on a dubbed picture we die a death ; as soon as the word dubbed or post-synched goes up, or it gets round, or the critics mention it (as with *Eve,* 'Stanley Baker, Jeanne Moreau speak with their own voices but all the rest were dubbed', which was untrue) the film dies a death.

B—Why is that ?

CLAVERING : Because people in the West End will not have dubbed pictures.

B—How about cinemas out of London ?

CLAVERING : Out of London they won't have films with sub-titles.

B—From the distributor's point of view if he is going to have films in both cinemas, he needs two versions ?

CLAVERING : That is becoming more and more so. When I was a director of the Compton-Cameo company that is what we found.

B—On your highly specialised product what kind of encouragement do you get from a producer or distributor to show difficult films, films which, from the point of view of a man who has to run the cinema as a business, may not appear to be easy money-makers ?

CLAVERING : We get no encouragement. The Italians and the French producers are just after what they can get for their film. They want an advance guarantee. If it is two thousand, four thousand, five thousand pounds, they then look on it as money in the bank and they may get no more. They ask the price at the beginning. They hope for more later ; but they don't expect anything.

B—Is this because the British market has got such a bad name over a period of years ?

CLAVERING : The market over here has never taken well to Continental films like the American market is doing. As you know, they are opening all over Broadway. Germany is an enormous market for French films ; but not Britain.

B—But you yourself will take a risk on a film that has had no critical advance support, is not from a well known director, is something from one of the 'fringe' countries ? I am thinking, for instance, of the Spanish film *Diferente.* Why did you show that at the Cameo-Poly ?

CLAVERING : I saw that privately in Paris and thought it was simply wonderful. I went to the studios of Boulogne near Paris to see *The Devil and the Ten Commandments,* which I thought was a hundred per cent entertainment. We bring it over to the Cameo-Poly and the critics thought it was old fashioned. But I still claim it was the most underrated film of the year.

B—Do you in fact lose money on showing films like that ?

CLAVERING : Yes.

B—A considerable amount ?

CLAVERING : *Diferente* I don't know what we gave, I think a couple of thousand guarantee ; we put it on and it ran three weeks and we lost fifteen hundred there running it, taking into account publicity and so on.

B—And when you have a quality film that you know everyone who enjoys foreign films will want to see, for instance Fellini's *Eight and a Half,* it does not necessarily follow that you will make a lot of money because producer and distributor will be making greater demands for a share of the box-office receipts ?

CLAVERING : We put down a guarantee of £5,000 to get Fellini in spite of its opening concurrent with La Continentale. It meant if it came off after a week we would lose our £5,000 plus whatever we lost at the cinema on publicity display and overheads. But it has now been running for seven weeks and the guarantee is paid off.

B—This is paid off as part of a percentage rental on the picture ?

CLAVERING : Always a percentage. We do not pay any hire until the original £5,000 guarantee is paid off. There is always the 25 per cent, 33½ per cent and fifty per cent rental according to a 'break' figure on the week's takings. In the first week the film hire for *Eight and a Half* was about £1,500. Now we have paid the whole of the £5,000 back to ourselves and from now on start paying the distributor. When the weekly takings drop below an agreed level, we take it off. Between a thousand or eleven hundred at the Poly.

B—Every year you have over a hundred foreign films registered at the Board of Trade from which you could select your programmes. How do you personally go about deciding what films to show ? Because you probably don't consume more than about 20 new films a year at the cinemas you control.

CLAVERING : For the Poly, which is my pet, if it is a Fellini, Visconti, Bergman, Antonioni, perhaps Cayette, maybe Autant-Lara right from the time I see from the French trade papers it is going into production I keep an eye on it and follow it all the way along and try to get it. I tell the British distributor, if it has one, that I am interested. With Resnais' *Muriel* I found out immediately that it was United Artists, *Elektra* the same, and we got the options. Other films, like Louis Malle's *Le feu follet* (I did not go to Venice, I went over to Paris last week and saw it there) or *Les Abysses,* which Gala has, I ask to see them. I often go to Paris for a week or five days and see two dozen films. In the case of *Marienbad* I saw it when everyone else was frightened to death by it, but that I was determined to have. Bergman . . . well, it is not so much a matter of judging a film as Bergman's popularity with audiences. His popularity started to wane two or three films ago. Then I saw *Through a Glass Darkly,* an interesting film, and I thought 'Bergman is not quite dead over here yet' and I thought it might go, and it did.

'People in the West End will not have dubbed pictures'

B—You are not really concerned with *your* opinion but the opinion of the kind of people you want to attract to your cinema ?

CLAVERING : Exactly. I have to eat. I like eating well.

B—What makes your audience go to the cinema to see a specialist's film ?

CLAVERING : The *avant garde* cinema represented today by France and Italy more than anywhere else. There is a large public for that. People who are tired of seeing the *New Kinds of Love* which are really an old kind of love, at the Plaza, or *How the West Was Won or Lost* somewhere else. In *Billy Liar,* although the critics raved about it, I couldn't keep awake and (I know I'm quite wrong), *Tom Jones* I walked out from. Not that we are crazy on *avant garde* films but we like entertainment, we like to be fascinated or mesmerised, and those films did not fascinate, mesmerise, keep me awake or make me want to stay to the end.

B—You mentioned that you had to close your cinemas in Walthamstow and Leyton. They are both pretty large areas of population.

CLAVERING : They are too near the West End of London.

B—Is there not scope for the development outside of London of cinemas like the Cameo-Poly, the Academy, the Paris-Pullman and so on ?

CLAVERING : Proof is to hand, because, unhappily except in towns like Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and one or two others occasionally (Brighton is no good, too near London) the Cameo-Poly and the Academy type

'In Britain . . . the greatest encouragement is given to those who cater for mass tastes'

film, unless exceptional, just don't go. Fellini's *Eight and Half*, I don't know how many bookings Gala will get on that but I shouldn't think more than about eighty. On a big film like that.

B—How many people in London will have seen *Eight and Half* by the time you have finished your run ?

CLAVERING : Six weeks at La Continentale, at least twelve at the Cameo-Poly, possibly a twenty week run altogether, an average of 10,000 people a week, that is a total 200,000 people.

B—Two hundred thousand from an area the size of London is a small percentage.

CLAVERING : It is a small percentage. But out of London less than a population of half a million is not big enough to support a specialist cinema. But of course a film like *Eight and a Half* will have a second run.

B—But it is surely possible for a cinema in the provinces to show a high standard of repertory with the occasional foreign film and develop audience taste in that way ?

CLAVERING : That is what we do at the Leicester Cameo — *High Noon, The L-Shaped Room* and so on, with the type of foreign film we show at the Cameo-Royal.

B—Now about the Cameo-Moulin. The nudie films. Is that an aspect of 'Continental' cinema that is going eventually to disappear ?

CLAVERING : What about the nudie magazines ? Harrison Marks has half a dozen of them and when there is a new edition they sell out. With the nudies, so long as there are some pretty girls in them, are fairly well made, people will continue to go and see them.

B—What is your reaction to the way some cinemas as soon as they start showing nudie films call themselves an 'art cinema' ?

CLAVERING : I think it is a gimmick to call it an art cinema. I call them nudies. I just can't be bothered with them. I have to see these wretched things to check that there is ten or fifteen minutes of so-called nudity in them. Most of the bodies are hideous, all self-conscious the way they hold the towel in front of them, the men always three-quarter rear view going away from the camera . . . all ridiculous, they make me roar with laughter. But there is a public for them.

B—There is a trend in Britain and America to make small budget films, films away from the main stream of commercial cinema, films like *The Caretaker, Lunch Hour, The Cool World, David and Lisa.* These surely have an affinity with specialised audiences ?

CLAVERING : *David and Lisa* we were going to show; but we didn't have room for it. I am quite sure the original Jean Genet language is not in *The Balcony.* I am sure it is a film that could be sensationalised, which is why it is going to the Academy so it cannot be.

B—These films are in the English language from the start. Is that an advantage?

CLAVERING : Not particularly.

B—Is it the snob value that makes people want to see a foreign language film in preference to one made in their own language ?

CLAVERING : I don't think it is snob value that makes me crave a French meal with their wonderful sauces and the way it is served, the atmosphere of food in a French restaurant. You cannot get that atmosphere of sophistication in an English restaurant, or in an English film. The English language is a drawback compared with the French language, which flows very beautifully and evenly, even if you don't understand it. It all adds up to the sophistication of France; the food, the films, the air, roads and trees, in the south that wonderful warmth, the way people dress. So English films start at a disadvantage.

B—British films also suffer from a lack of Government or industry subsidy for quality.

CLAVERING : Certainly. In France and Italy new directors are encouraged with Government grants. They are encouraged to make films of artistic merit and to break new ground. In Britain the opposite is the case. The greatest encouragement is given to those who cater for mass tastes. So that we find producers and directors concentrating on low comedy and horror films because as these have a greater box office pull they thus will receive so much extra money for each extra £ taken on this popular type of entertainment from the British Film Production Fund.

If a British director wished to make *Eight and a Half, The Eclipse, Through a Glass Darkly,* he would know that the film would have to be financed with a certainty that only a few cinemas would show it and so the BFPF return would be almost nil. You therefore cannot expect anything more from Britain, except from the courageous and devoted few, other than 'the doctor in the house tells the nurse to carry on with dracula '.

B—Frequently *films and filming* readers criticise the kind of publicity used for foreign films. They argue that lurid posters often distort the basic theme of a film. Why as an exhibitor do you indulge in this kind of thing ?

CLAVERING : At the Cameo-Poly, I don't. I use a plain poster very often. I never sensationalise the films at all. La Continentale in Tottenham Court-road has a different public and when, as sometimes happens, it plays the same film as we do, its publicity is different.

* * *

By now it will be obvious even to the reader who doesn't like foreign films and has no knowledge of how the film industry functions, that a key to getting a wider distribution of foreign films in Britain is the attitude of the two major circuits. The films shown by the Rank Organisation are booked by George Pinches and the films shown on ABC cinemas are booked by W R Barton.

I asked both bookers to meet for an interview. They were the only people among the many I contacted who declined. Mr Pinches wrote 'it would be better if you would be kind enough to submit some kind of questionnaire of what it is you would like to know. We can then give the matter some consideration.' The following day I sent Mr Pinches these questions :

1. The Board of Trade has stated that in 1962 it registered 71 British films, 117 films from the United States, and 131 films from other countries of a running time exceeding seventy-two minutes. During the current year it appears that the two major circuits and the 'third circuit' in so far as it operates will have put out 22 foreign films. I am including in this accounting such titles as *Sodom and Gomorrah, Barabbas* and *Phaedra* which it might be argued are creatively American 'runaway' productions.
   In your opinion—
   (a) Have the circuits shown all the foreign films that British cinemagoers would like to see?
   (b) Would it not be possible to give a general release to the 'missing' 109 foreign features if the 'third circuit' had not lapsed?
   Can you please comment on—
   (c) How do you decide what films *not* to book. (For instance, you cannot personally see all 319 films registered in Britain—or do you? If you don't—who does?)
   (d) Have you any evidence that British cinemagoers do not want to see a film *merely because it is foreign*? (This is nothing to do with whether or not it is commercially good; but if you have two films which, in your opinion are excellent entertainment, the one American the other foreign, is there evidence that audiences will reject the foreign because of its origin?)
2. It has been brought to my attention that the foreign film that the trade might term an 'art picture' can play several hundred bookings in Britain and yet only recover a distributor's gross of about £5,000 or £6,000. It is logical that no circuit would remain in business if that kind of film was booked for a simultaneous release in two or three hundred cinemas. Nevertheless, even a small return is evidence that some people want to see this kind of specialised film.
   In your opinion—
   (a) Should the major circuits encourage the exhibition of films, generally accepted at the international festivals and by the critics, as works of art?
   (b) If so—how?
   Can you please comment on—
   (c) The extent to which 'art films' are being shown in your company's cinemas. (In general terms I mean films like *Last Year in Marienbad* and not *Sodom and Gomorrah.* For instance, you were recently quoted in the *Sunday Times* as saying that *Last Year in Marienbad,* when played at a Newcastle-on-Tyne cinema, did disastrous business—was it the right cinema to play it?)
   (d) Any moves within your organisation to give special treatment to specialised films. (Have you made a survey of cinemas or towns where any of your cinemas might become specialised houses permanently? Has anyone investigated the present rapid growth of art film exhibition in the States?)

(e) On pre-release you sometimes book a foreign film as a supporting feature. (The Odeon, Kensington, played *400 Blows* (French) with *Five Miles to Midnight*.) But the foreign film is dropped on general release. Have you evidence that it would be disastrous to drop it—for instance, why should Kensington residents support the programme but not, say, people living in Edinburgh, Liverpool or Birmingham?

3. Why is it that cinemas in France and Italy advertising certain films (of all nationalities) make considerable play in their advertising that the film has won an award at a major festival; but not only in Britain do circuit cinemas seldom show a festival award film, but when they do, invariably fail to mention the awards in the advertising copy? (A few years ago the Odeon and Gaumont cinemas showed *Destiny of a Man* without mentioning it was Russian or that it was a festival award-winner.)
4. When showing foreign films on your circuit, do you require English-language dubbed versions, or English sub-titled? Have you any evidence of audience prejudices on this matter?
5. Do you anticipate in the years ahead that British audiences will become as familiar with French or Italian films as are the French and Italian audiences with British and American? Or are British audiences always going to be 'different' in some way?

After advising the Rank Organisation of the final date the survey was closing for press, Mr Pinches wrote:

'It may be within your knowledge that a new Information Controller has just been appointed for The Rank Organisation, namely Mr Don Harker, and that this particular matter will logically be a part of Mr Harker's general survey of our operations.

'If our Information Controller ultimately decides he can make some useful comments in answer to the points you have raised then he will get in touch with you.'

Mr Harker did not get in touch with me.

I also sent Mr. Barton a similar questionnaire. He replied: 'Frankly, these can only be answered by the major distributors of this type of film who also, in many cases, run specialised theatres in in this country. As far as we (ABC) are concerned most Continental pictures have proven "horses for courses" and we do play many in those halls where audiences have by a good measure of support confirmed they are acceptable'.

I regret the circuits' policy of disengagement because I am sure they are often misunderstood by some sections of the industry and by a large number of ordinary cinemagoers. And the circuits can also create problems for the producers of foreign films without realising they have done so. For instance, since the circuits have given extended playing time to an increasing number of 'big' British and American films, some independent cinemas take the second string of top British and American features, which previously may not have been available to them, instead of trying out Continental films.

CENSOR

A man who is in some ways an umpire in this dispute between foreign producers and British exhibitors is the secretary of the British Board of Film Censors, JOHN TREVELYAN. The Board also sees foreign films from another angle—are they liable to deprave and corrupt British cinemagoers if their distribution becomes more widespread?

I asked Mr Trevelyan why he thought so few British cinemagoers see a foreign language film?

TREVELYAN: It is a question that worries me, too. I hear from my contacts, and I have seen for myself, that the market for foreign language films is way up in the United States, yet it is way down, here. Admittedly the art houses in Britain are comparatively small in number, and I conclude they are not bringing in sufficient financial return to enable the people who buy these films to gather a good return from them.

Four or five years ago when I was in Paris I had a talk to producers there and I said I thought they were asking much too much money for their films. Remember what happened to Carne's *Les Tricheurs*. I was told that the producer asked so much for that that no one in Britain would pay it. It was two years delayed, and at the time it came to Britain it had lost its immediate interest.

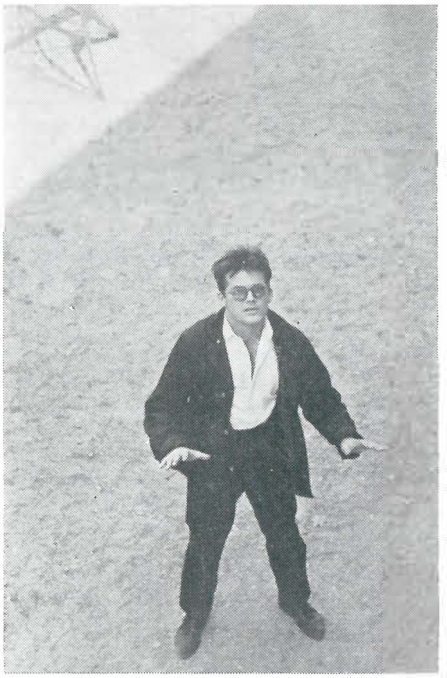
This is one reason why foreign films have a limited distribution. But I am still mystified why attendances at specialised cinemas are not going up as they are in the States.

B—John Davis, managing director of the Rank Organisation, has said he prefers films that are not X certificate because they are more suitable for a family audience. Now you recently presented some statistics to producers in Hollywood. They were that your Board in 1962 awarded 171 U certificates, 169 A certificates and 102 X certificates. Of these X certificates, no fewer than 47 were British and American (32 from the States) and 34 from France and Italy (25 from France), the two countries supplying most of the foreign language films shown in Britain.

TREVELYAN: There has been some liberalisation of the interpretation of the Production Code in the United States and Hollywood pictures contain material these days which even three years ago they wouldn't contain. Many of them tend to be in-between pictures, on the borderline of the X and A, and it is a toss up if a company takes an X or whether it will take an A certificate with certain cuts. This is why the number of pictures from the United States in the X category has become as large as it is.

B—But giving a foreign language film an X certificate surely limits its release?

TREVELYAN: I don't think so. You see, with the general release market, they don't like taking sub-titled films. Apparently the audience can't read quickly



Zbigniew Cybulski stars in Janusz Morgenstern's love story about students, 'See You Tomorrow'

French comedy surprise of '63: 'Pierre Etaix' first feature 'Le Soupirant' ('The Suitor'), in which he plays a young man who never quite manages to get his dream girl

Frank Perry's independently made first feature, 'David and Lisa'—psychological study of mentally unbalanced youths (with Keir Dullea and Howard Da Silva)

Contemporary's

OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL

1964 Releases

BLACK FOX ..... *U.S.A.*
FIDELIO ..... *AUSTRIA*
THE GODDESS ..... *INDIA*
WORLD OF STRANGERS ..... *DENMARK*
SUN AND SHADOW ..... *BULGARIA*
SNOW WHITE ..... *GERMANY*
SEE YOU TOMORROW ..... *POLAND*
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enough. It is very seldom they have a sub-titled film on general release. When they have a film like *La Dolce Vita* or *Le repos du guerrier* they usually dub it. They dub for the States, so it is easy to run a dubbed version in Britain. It is a happy solution to the problem.

B—When a film is being dubbed, do you try to put it in the A category if possible?

TREVELYAN: It depends entirely on the picture. We usually suggest that the distributor sends us the proposed dubbing dialogue before the work is done in case any problems arise on detailed lines of dialogue. Sometimes it produces a problem that an original language version doesn't produce.

B—You do not have a situation in which a dubbed version has an A certificate and the original language version an X?

TREVELYAN: Most unlikely. It has never happened yet, and I don't imagine that it will.

B—It is often suggested that you are more harsh on foreign films, particularly if they are going to be dubbed, than you are on films distributed by a major British or American company?

TREVELYAN: I thought we were usually accused of the exact opposite! There is some justification in a way of accusing us of the opposite. If we had a picture very much of French life, or at least as we in Britain imagine French life to be, we would probably accept the original version although we may not accept some of the things in a dubbed version; because people tend to accept a dubbed version as being a British or American film. I know American audiences often think a French dubbed film is an American film because the dubbing is American.

A producer of a British film will sometimes say to us 'I saw so and so in a foreign film but you won't let me do it here.' Our reply is that because it is nearer home in your case it produces a slightly different problem and makes us a little more cautious.

Where you are dealing with an original language version, as far as dialogue is concerned our view is that people who know the language well enough are people we need not greatly worry about unless something is frightfully obtrusive. The equivalent phrase in English might cause us quite a lot of trouble from all kinds of public bodies and individuals who disapprove of our decision.

B—That is because you know an original language version will have only a limited distribution?

TREVELYAN: To a certain extent, yes.

B—So if foreign language versions were to become much more popular you would become more strict in your appraisal of them?

TREVELYAN: That is difficult to answer. Possibly true. Your specialised theatre audience by and large tend to be of a more highly intellectual calibre than the general release audience. This is natural. I am not criticising the general release audience; they are happy with what they pay to see.

B—Do you consider people who go to see *Women of the World* a specialised theatre audience?

TREVELYAN: That is a rather different kind of specialised audience! What I think is becoming necessary—we talked about it five years ago with various people—is some kind of 'restricted distribution certificate'. A specialised theatre generally covers more than your intellectual audience.

B—What do you mean 'restricted?' Specifying the individual theatres that may show a film and the terms on which they may advertise it?

TREVELYAN: It is difficult to find a formula. I have had occasions when I have said to myself 'I wouldn't in the least mind this film being shown in a certain type of specialised theatre; but I would be worried if the film was likely to get out on general release'.

B—Is that why you withheld a certificate from *The Balcony*, knowing that The Academy would be able to get a local certificate from the London County Council?

TREVELYAN: It is a peculiar kind of picture and I think a brilliant one. There was no press build up on the picture and the Board had nothing from which to judge reactions to it. I felt happy at it starting in the Academy, as it did start, so that some judgment on the picture could be obtained before the Board committed itself to a potential wholesale distribution. Once given a certificate by us, a film can go anywhere and be promoted by exhibitors in any way. We have no control.

B—But you did control the promotion of the Bardot film *Le repos du guerrier* when you refused Gala a certificate until the English title, *Love on a Pillow* was changed to the more literal translation, *Warrior's Rest*?

TREVELYAN: We maintain control over titles.

B—Now what, for example, about the new Ingmar Bergman film, *The Silence*?

TREVELYAN: If you read a note in the *Times* you would see that there have been censorship issues raised in Sweden about it.

B—But the Swedish censor regards Bergman as a great artist and does not condone cutting a work of art. The Swedes would not cut a Bergman film.

TREVELYAN: From my knowledge of the Swedish censorship board, generally we work on very similar lines. Bergman has been elevated in Sweden to a position where he is virtually free of all kinds of control. In many respects I admire Sweden for doing that; but apparently in Sweden this picture has created some kind of criticism and the censor board has come in for it pretty strongly.

B—When you have a British film, like say *From Russia With Love*, do you not think that if the film had been French it would have been awarded an X certificate instead of an A?

TREVELYAN: Oh, no. This kind of really good 'hokum' picture is seldom made in France, if ever. If you take *From Russia With Love* seriously you've probably got to give it a double—X.

'We may accept in an original version what we would not accept dubbed'

B—So providing all kinds of abnormality and perversion are not taken seriously, the Board will award its A and not X certificate?

TREVELYAN: We've had this in lots of other pictures, you can't just put it down to that.

B—The reason Guy Hamilton's *The Party's Over* came under such strictures from you was because it took the abnormalities of the Chelsea set seriously?

TREVELYAN: No I wouldn't say that at all. It set a problem quite different from that of *From Russia With Love*. There has been a revised version of *The Party's Over*, with not too much deletion, and we accepted it with an X.

B—Sufficient revision for the producer and director to remove their names from the credit titles?

TREVELYAN: Yes, possibly so. If they feel strongly about it in that way, I am sorry, but there we are. I don't like cutting any picture.

B—In your relations with foreign producers, do you find they make versions for the British market, shooting alternative versions of scenes that they anticipate will meet with your disapproval?

TREVELYAN: No; but some American films are modified for the British market.

B—Do you find in general you are cutting more from foreign films than from British or American?

TREVELYAN: No, I wouldn't think so. Occasionally a foreign film is cut before it comes here. We did not cut anything in Visconti's *Rocco;* but after it was shown to British audiences it was established that the rape and knifing sequences had been cut by Visconti's producer before the version was sent to us. We did not ask for the cuts to be made.

B—And do you prefer the producer to do that?

TREVELYAN: I would think it better for the producer to leave his film intact and send it to us in its original state. I would be happier if they had solutions for scenes which ran into trouble. We do not want to make a bad job cutting a picture of class.

B—Sometimes our readers object that there are more than one version of a particular film going around. Can that be because some prints contain scenes you had insisted should be taken out?

TREVELYAN: I think this is very rare. I once saw a film myself some years ago which contained a scene we had specifically ordered to be removed. We took it up at once and the print was altered. We have no means of checking that our demands have in fact been met unless someone complains to us, or one of our

reviewers who actually reviewed the film also happens to see it in the public cinema. We establish with companies that there can only be one version of a film. Certainly we could not entertain different versions. In time a distributor may cut the length of a film for re-issue purposes; and it is not impossible that in that process something might become censorable that was not censorable in the full version.

B—What legal action can you take if a cinema shows an unauthorised version?

TREVELYAN: None. The exhibitor is required by terms of his license to show the Board's certificate before each film. If we reported an unauthorised version, the local authority would take up the matter with the cinema under the local authority's legal power. In an extreme case presumably the exhibitor would lose his licence.

B—But the poor exhibitor has received the print from a distributor. How does he know what is or is not your approved version?

TREVELYAN: That is perfectly true. How any legal action would work I don't know; such a situation has not arisen.

B—Occasionally you are accused of refusing to give a certificate to a foreign film because of its political nature?

TREVELYAN: You mean *Operation Teutonic Sword* and *Holiday on Sylt*. They are the only two in recent years. We refused them, but not on political grounds. We did not think that cinema entertainment was the right place for putting over defamatory material about a living person. We try to base our decisions on what we believe most reasonable and intelligent people would do in similar circumstances. This one is an arguable question. Whether we were right or wrong I am not prepared to say. Since those films we have had several films of a political nature coming from East Germany and other places behind the Iron Curtain and we have given them a certificate and not made any cuts in them.

B—There has not yet been a clash of policy between you and television. But a situation could well arise that a film to which you refuse a certificate, or which you cut heavily, is shown late at night for minority TV audiences?

TREVELYAN: It might arise; but it hasn't arisen yet. I was asked recently about one x film shown on TV. It was an old film and today we might not have given it an X. But it is utterly wrong that TV should be denied adult stuff, particularly late in the evening. I would be very sorry if TV had to be confined to material thought suitable only for children.

B—Yet some local authorities have prevented certain films being shown in cinemas on a Sunday, yet the same films have been seen by people living in the local authority area by TV on a Sunday.

TREVELYAN: Well some local authorities are run by people who are strict Sabbatarians, and the majority of people today are not Sabbatarians. The situation of TV has never been in our control, but neither has it yet presented us with any problems. It always might. But it might also provide an opportunity for people who want to see foreign films and who cannot see them in cinemas to see them at home on their TV sets. And that would surely be a good thing? In any case, today I think TV is more likely to run into criticism than we are, so it is unlikely there will be uncensored foreign films as a regular TV diet.

CRITICS

During my conversations with distributors, and to a lesser extent with cinema owners, I was frequently asked 'What about the critics?' 'What, what about the critics?' I asked in reply.

It seems that many film men are convinced that the critics either do not do enough to support foreign films; or do too much of the wrong kind of supporting.

For instance, the big circulation daily newspapers seldom mention the new foreign films, or, if they do, bury a couple of patronising lines about them at the end of the writer's column. Don't blame the writer; it is the editor's fault. I know several critics who have nearly come to blows with editors over their arguments in favour of more space in which to review more (and that often means foreign) films. But an editor is concerned with the circulation of his newspaper, not the distribution problems of foreign producers. Like any mass media that is not government sponsored like the BBC, the public must call the tune; and the only tunes they know are the often played commercial ones.

But what of the critics in the 'quality' papers? I would have thought the people who show foreign films in Britain were well pleased with the work, for instance, of Dilys Powell in the *Sunday Times*, Penelope Gilliatt in *The Observer*, or Philip Oakes in the *Sunday Telegraph*. Well, of course, most of the time they *are* satisfied, particularly when it is their foreign film that leads the writer's column over the latest piece of routine commercialism from British or American studios. But I frequently came across complaints that the critics are influenced more by fashion than by their individual assessments of a film. As one distributor said: 'First it was a Bergman wave, then they caught on to the *nouvelle vague*, switched to Antonioni and now, I suppose, it's all got to be *cinema verité*'.

I don't think this is altogether true of the critics who write for the serious newspapers and magazines. It is not unreasonable that intelligent and informed people, as a group, will recognise new talent and styles as and where they arise. But I agree that there is a tendency in criticism in Britain today for too few critics to evaluate what the film-maker has tried to do within the film-maker's own terms of reference; rather, the critic tells the film-maker what he should have done within the critic's determined terms of reference. And, of course, there will always be the bad critic in the bad paper who, completely lost, will follow whichever leader he thinks will take him into the light of easy living.

Criticism being such a personal thing anyway, it is virtually impossible to summarise its influence in a survey of this kind. But obviously the critics have a very great influence on the commercial fate of the foreign film in Britain, far more than they do over the routine British or American picture. Some distributors think they are unfair to the foreign film that does not arrive with a pedigree but which, nevertheless, may be as worth seeing as the new Jerry Lewis or Doris Day. But then, of course, most film men regard the film critic as an unpaid publicist for their films. From the cinema-goer's point of view it is wise to consider the opinions of more than one critic; and even then, it is a good thing to find out for yourself. After all, a second hand film is about as exciting as a chewed piece of gum.

SOCIETIES

There is one aspect of the subject that a surprising number of people in the industry overlook—the film societies. Together with the National Film Theatre they play a unique part in shaping public opinion and creating a demand.

E FRASER SMITH, film supply officer for the Federation of Film Societies, gave his personal views.

B—How many film societies are there in Britain?

FRASER SMITH: Just over 400.

B—How many people are members? Half a million?

FRASER SMITH: No, nothing like that. I should say 50,000.

B—How often do they meet?

FRASER SMITH: Usually once a month; that is, with the summer recess, ten programmes a year.

B—They show old films as well as new ones coming onto the market, so they must be highly selective. Of the new films—the Board of Trade registers about 130 foreign films every year—about how many find their way to the societies?

FRASER SMITH: I would say twenty at the most.

B—What is the purpose of a film society?

FRASER SMITH: Why do people ever come together? To exchange ideas, to enjoy an interest in common, and to convert their neighbours. Film stimulates and satisfies all these aims. It is a medium which dramatizes, or presents in cold fact, the life of a nation or a single man to the members sitting in the village hall. Only in a film society can the members themselves programme for a definite object.

B—Do you think the societies hold sufficient meetings to cover even a part of the vast ground of world cinema?

FRASER SMITH: A society can cover much ground with only ten or twelve films a year. It depends what they set out to do.

B—So at their best, the societies plan a programme with a theme, for instance, the ten key films of the nouvelle vague in France?

FRASER SMITH: Yes, or films of one director or even the work of an outstanding cameraman.

B—Cinema owners often resent film societies, which they regard as direct opposition to the films they are showing.

FRASER SMITH: This is a mistaken idea, the film society is not in opposition to the commercial cinema. On the contrary, the film society encourages interest in cinema. It has in the last few years created a new audience who are really interested in the films they go to see.

B—You regard the film society movement as an essential part of the film industry?

FRASER SMITH: A more critical audience is essential if we are to have a flourishing British film industry. The commercial cinema must of necessity play safe and follow, not lead, audience taste—this is equally true abroad. Without the minority audience, which the film society movement represents, young directors with new ideas would never get a chance to express themselves, and it is on the young director who will not conform to the traditions of the past that any film industry must build its future.

B—In purely commercial terms, I suspect the film societies mean very little to the industry.

FRASER SMITH: It depends what you mean by commercial terms? I have already stated that the film society movement has created a new audience. This audience represents the box office of tomorrow.

B—How much does a society pay for a film? £4 or £5?

FRASER SMITH: Considerably more than that. 16 mm societies pay about £7 10s 0d for one night's screening. A society operating on 35 mm will pay from £25 to £40.

B—So with 400 societies going, that is about £3,000 a month.

FRASER SMITH: About £30,000 a year. However, the more important contribution made is 'opinion forming'. Film society members talk to their friends and the idea spreads that it can be worthwhile seeing a foreign film with sub-titles. This is one of the major prejudices which has to be broken down among the mass audiences.

B—I have an impression that film societies don't set about publicising themselves enough. How else will they gain more members? Perhaps you like to be a society and as such don't want too many people?

FRASER SMITH: If a society exists to exchange ideas it will want to expand. Like all groups they will publicise their activities to their potential audience. The amount of publicity will, of course, be limited by their financial resources. Like all voluntary organisations we tend to exist on a shoe-string, this can be a virtue as it stimulates enterprise.

B—How do secretaries of individual film societies go about booking their films?

FRASER SMITH: The Federation organises national and regional viewing sessions to screen new films for programme secretaries. In addition, the federation publishes its own review film magazine, *Film News*, which is circulated to societies. The critics of the quality national newspapers also play a part in selection.

B—In your experience, what sort of turnover of membership does a society have? Do people come for a month or two, then give it up; or, once members, are they members for life?

FRASER SMITH: In every group there will be found a floating turnover but in a film society there is a hard core of enthusiasts as well as the loyal regular member.

B—Is it the social side that is attractive; the meeting of new people over a cup of coffee?

FRASER SMITH: People join a society, film or otherwise, for social reasons. Discussion is a very important function of a film society; this is clearly more enjoyable over a cup of coffee.

B—If someone wants to join a film society, how can they set about finding where there is one in their locality?

FRASER SMITH: They should write to the Secretary of the Federation of Film Societies, Mrs M Hancock, 35 Priory-road, Sheffield 7, or ask at their local library or civic information bureau.

EXPORT

A lot of people in Britain work hard to promote an interest in films from all parts of the world. But only the negative things seem to be known by foreign film-makers themselves. I went back to MICHAEL BROMHEAD, the general manager of Lion International, in order to find out the reaction he gets as an ambassador for British films in foreign markets. 'For many years now you have been dealing with every country in the West and sometimes countries in the East. You must' I asked him 'occasionally have a come-back when they ask "What are you doing to get our films shown in Britain" '?

BROMHEAD: It happens very frequently. It is a very big problem because it arises in the form of a demand for reciprocal trading. To get an import licence for a country like Mexico, which is the worst example at the moment, where there is no Anglo-Mexican film agreement and therefore officially no import licences for British films, they take the view (quite generous in once sense) that for every three British films allowed into Mexico they want one Mexican film to be shown in England. We point out that there is nothing whatever to prevent a Mexican film coming to Britain anyway. We have no import restriction whatever. Where the snag comes is that, having had some experience of the English market, they want us to guarantee a certain release for it. And this it is impossible for us to do.

B—Particularly as your organisation doesn't own any cinemas in which you could show a Mexican film.

BROMHEAD: That helps us to some degree because we can patently show the Mexicans that we can't ourselves show their films. If there is a demand for a Mexican film in Britain exhibitors will book it and the public will pay to see it. If the film is not to the taste of the public in Britain, or the cinemas don't exist that can play it, there is nothing we as film salesmen can do about it.

B—Do they not insist that, with your company about to release a British film *Heavens Above*, you should tell exhibitors in Britain they can only have that film if they also show the latest musical made in Mexico?

BROMHEAD: They have not been quite as blatant as that about it. But they do not seem to accept our explanations. At this stage the discussions usually bog down, in the case of Mexico they have bogged down completely. It so happens that British Lion has recently bought a Mexican film; it is a thoroughly commercial film and we can make money with it. It is called *Rape of the Sabine Women;* a typical spectacular type of the kind made mainly in Italy and has a certain market over here, not necessarily for circuit release, but for independents.

B—Have you specific evidence that British films are refused an overseas showing because other countries are not satisfied a square deal is being given their product in Britain?

BROMHEAD: Not a British film being refused, it is more a question of import licences for British films not being granted. If your film gets in it stands on its merits and by and large British films are quite popular. Often a foreign country has a popular demand for British films but we have not a popular demand for their films.

B—Are there any occasions when you do a deal whereby foreign countries will take a British film and your company gives a guaranteed sum of money to take one of their films in return? In other words, you pay a kind of bribe for getting a British film in a foreign market.

BROMHEAD: Only to an extent with the Soviet Union. We have a set arrangement that for every two they buy of ours we buy one of theirs.

B—What happens to the ones you buy? Looking through the releases of recent months I cannot trace a Russian film being commercially shown.

BROMHEAD: Not very commercial showings; the best we can offer them is restricted art theatre showings. We had *Ballad of a Soldier*, for example, and that played well at the Curzon. We put *Seryozha* (*The Splendid Days*) at the Cameo-Poly for two disasterous weeks,

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although it was a lovely film and in most countries of the world had rave press notices. In Britain it was mawled by the press. Those who bothered to review it gave it three or four lines at the bottom of a page. Nobody came to see it.

B—The wider the showing for foreign films in Britain, the easier it is going to make your job of selling British films overseas?

BROMHEAD: Certainly.

B—Looking to the possibility of Britain making another bid to join the European Common Market, it will surely be important to the film industry that Italian, French and German films are shown more widely in our cinemas?

BROMHEAD: At present the Continental countries regard England as being the worst market in the world. It is better in Russia for them. At least they sell everything on a flat rate to the Russians and sell a high proportion and get a fair amount of exchange out of it. Here, in Britain, they can put on their films with great effort, find a theatre to show them or a small distributor to handle them, and then the film dies a death and they get little or nothing at the end of their trouble. They pay very high distribution fees for their films from the small independents who will take them. At least where the Russians are concerned they know that when they sell a film they get cash; it may not be big, but its something.

B—Why is Britain the worst market?

BROMHEAD: I think partly because of the lack of a large number of small, intimate theatres. There are several in the West End of London but they are not all playing this kind of product; many of them are showing nudist films.

B—When you are handling your own British films overseas and you go into say Spain, France, Italy or Germany, you surely usually find that it is the dubbed version that is wanted?

BROMHEAD: Yes. But there are differences. France, for example, has twenty-five to thirty places throughout the country where you can run a French sub-titled version. It used to be restricted by law but now it is a practical restriction because beyond those situations you must have a dubbed version if the exhibitor is going to book it. Germany won't touch any sub-titles. It is dubbed: or nothing at all. Italy the same. Spain wants dubbed versions; but in South America, although you may have your Spanish language version available, they insist on sub-titles.

CONCLUSIONS

My conclusions are not so important as the conclusions of the people who make foreign films, the people who do (or do not!) exhibit them in Britain and, most important, the people who want (or do not want!) to see them. But to me, anyway, seven major points emerge from this survey:

- British people are more insular and less cosmopolitan than the Americans. There is in Britain a reaction against anything foreign, including films, that is unique and unlike anything I have seen anywhere in the world. (Even in Moscow I have seen people fighting to buy seats for British, American, Italian and French films).
- The standard of education in Britain is lower than in some other countries; and this has contributed to the present climate in which 'art' is virtually regarded as a dirty word and the substitutes that 'popular entertainment' provides for a full emotional experience, are sold by the hucksters alongside the washing powders, deodorants and homicidal horseless carriages.
- Many of the smaller film distribution companies and cinema groups are making genuine and worthwhile efforts to give foreign films of quality a wider showing in Britain; but there is little evidence that the major groups—notably the Rank and ABC circuits—are concerned with developing audience tastes, either with a sense of public welfare or with an object of possible company profit. (It would be a deplorable indictment of the publishing world, for instance, if vast publishers like Penguin Books were concerned only with investing in the publishing of Agatha Christies).
- British producers appear unconcerned that foreign audiences give considerably more support to British pictures than British audiences give to foreign pictures. Industrially, this lack of concern does not augur well for the outcome of co-production agreements between Britain and the Common Market countries.
- Too few cinemas outside of London regularly show good foreign films. Partly this is because most of the old cinemas are too large and too few small cinemas, the kind that can afford to specialise, have been built since 1945 when box-office returns started their disasterous decline. But with 1,500 cinemas not tied to the mass release policies of the two big circuits, it is surely reasonable to expect that out of London more cinemas than at present should go specialised.
- The film critics, tied as they are to the demands of their editors, might nonetheless ask themselves if there is not more they can do to give a larger number of people an interest in some of the better foreign films: and to ask themselves if they are not becoming 'cultists' instead of 'individualists'?
- Foreign producers themselves have not invested in the British market as have the Americans (who are themselves none the less 'foreign'). Much more needs to be done by way of advertising and publicity to 'sell' the idea of seeing French, Italian, and other foreign films to potential British cinemagoers.

But then, if you prefer to think of Great Britain and scorn the reality of Little England, I doubt if much can be done to bring us into the mainstream of world cinema. The Channel, tunnel or no tunnel, will for ever keep us apart.

A comedy about paralytics—Marco Ferreri's 'El Cochecito' ('The Wheelchair'), with José Isbert as Don Anselmo who connives to get a motorised wheelchair

Bourvil in Jean-Pierre Mocky's comedy about man who follows in family tradition of idleness, 'Un Drole de Paroissien'

Return to the concentration camp theme: young East German director, Frank Beyer's second feature 'Nackt unter Wölfen,' adapted from a book by Bruno Apitz

Bunuel's chambermaid by Peter Graham

Luis Buñuel's new French made film, 'Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre' stars Jeanne Moreau with (left) Daniel Ivernel

At the St Maurice Studios, Buñuel has been making his version of Octave Mirbeau's novel *Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre*. The atmosphere on set was remarkably relaxed; the crew was small, there was little of the tension that one usually finds, and everyone gave the impression of going about their business quietly and efficiently. It is nearly always the temperament of the director which conditions the atmosphere on set: Buñuel is grave and deliberate. He seems to know exactly what he wants and feels no need to raise his voice to get it. He pays minute attention of framing, to the angles of the actors' faces, to the proportions of light and dark masses. During the take, his deafness cruelly robs him of much that the actors say, but he scrutinises every gesture and flicker of expression. Sometimes he will consult with his son, who acts as his right-hand man, to verify an inflection.

Buñuel's ravaged face gives him a mournful air while he is directing. But during pauses between shots, an occasional mischievous grin completely transforms his expression. He is notoriously unwilling to discuss his work in general —he will refer one to his films or to his son for the answers—but he was quite prepared to say a few words about *Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre*. He had not seen the version that Renoir shot in America in 1946, but his son, who had, told me that Buñuel would emphasise the social and political aspects more than Renoir had done. But, Buñuel said, 'I have changed the ending. The book ends tragically with a murder of revenge. In my film the protagonists settle down to a peaceful bourgeois life'. He added, with a wicked ironic grin, 'It'll be "happy" end!'

I asked him why he chose the novel, 'Because I liked it. A lot of people have warned me that it would make an antisemitic film. But it's not at all an antisemitic film. It's a picture of the landowning bourgeoisie of about 1930. People read Action Francaise. The manservant meets the sacristan in the kitchen in the evenings to compose propaganda leaflets denouncing the fact that France has been sold to the Jews. The film will end with a right wing demonstration, Herriot to the stake, Vive Chiappe! etc. There are antisemitic characters, but it is certainly not an antisemitic film. No, not at all.' How did he like working in France after an interval of 33 years? (*L'Age d'Or* was made in 1930). 'Oh I'm fed up with living in a hotel for months on end, it's very tiring. I am longing to get back to Mexico, where I feel really at home, working with people I know'. Buñuel has no plans for a new film yet. I asked him about the film *Tristana,* which was announced last spring as due to be shot in Spain. 'That was very sad. Everything was ready; the shooting script, the actors, the studio, everything. And then the day before shooting was scheduled to begin the Spanish government banned the film'.

There are few projects apart from those I mentioned last month. Maurice Cloche will be making a come-back with *Ici La Mondaine.* And Denys de la Patellière is preparing a block-buster, *L'Echiquier de Dieu* (*God's Chessboard*), which will be shot in Jugoslavia. The screenplay will be signed by the curious trio of Patellière, Raoul Lévy, and Jean Anouilh; the stars include Anthony Quinn, Horst Buchholz, Peter Ustinov, Orson Welles, Robert Hossein, Elsa Martinelli, and someone by the extraordinary name of Lynn Sue Moon.

Scarcely a week can go by without Jean-Luc Godard somehow getting into the news. He has now decided that after his chastening experience with Carlo Ponti over *Le Mépris,* he has had enough of producers, and is founding his own production company. With typical arrogance he states: 'As it is the director who in the end has to take the responsibility, I intend to take the whole responsibility. From now on, no one will have the right to give me their opinion. I will produce, I will write, and I will direct my films. And if it works, then I will pocket all the money.'

He is calling his company Aniouschka Productions (after his wife Anna Karina), and his first film under his own aegis will be an adaptation of an American detective story, *Fool's Gold.* Two gangsters discover that their mutual girl-friend's aunt has a fortune hidden away. But they are forestalled in their attempts to steal it by some rival gangsters. It turns out in the end that the notes were worthless. Anna Karina will play the girl, Claude Brasseur (son of Pierre) the tough gangster, and Sami Frey the gangster with the heart of gold. The title of the film is not yet definite; someone realised the other day that the film Albicocco is preparing (an adventure story set in French Guiana) is also called *L'Or des Fous.*

The young, dynamic producer, Jacques Bar, recently flounced convention by making Louis Malle and François Truffaut the following proposal: 'Whichever of you two brings me the best treatment and asks me for the least money will make *L'Homme a Cheval* (after Drieu La Rochelle) with Alain Delon starring.' The two directors sportingly accepted the competition. But it has since been announced that the film will be made in America with Sam Peckinpah (*Guns In The Afternoon*) as director. This will be Delon's first film in America.

Unifrance has hit on a novel way of promoting French films abroad. It has been organising a series of shorts which will show French stars and directors at work, and which they hope later to sell to television all over the world. Up to now, two have been made. Reichenbach visited the set of *Ni Saints Ni Saufs* and filmed René Clément filming. Philippe de Broca has made a short about Bardot: he shows her arrival at the studios in slow motion and makes her work on the set of *Une Ravissante Idiote* look like slapstick by shooting it in fast motion. Just a few days ago, de Broca mysteriously gave up the film. He discreetly refuses to say anything.

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